



# THE BUFFALO BILL STORIES

A WEEKLY PUBLICATION  
DEVOTED TO BORDER HISTORY

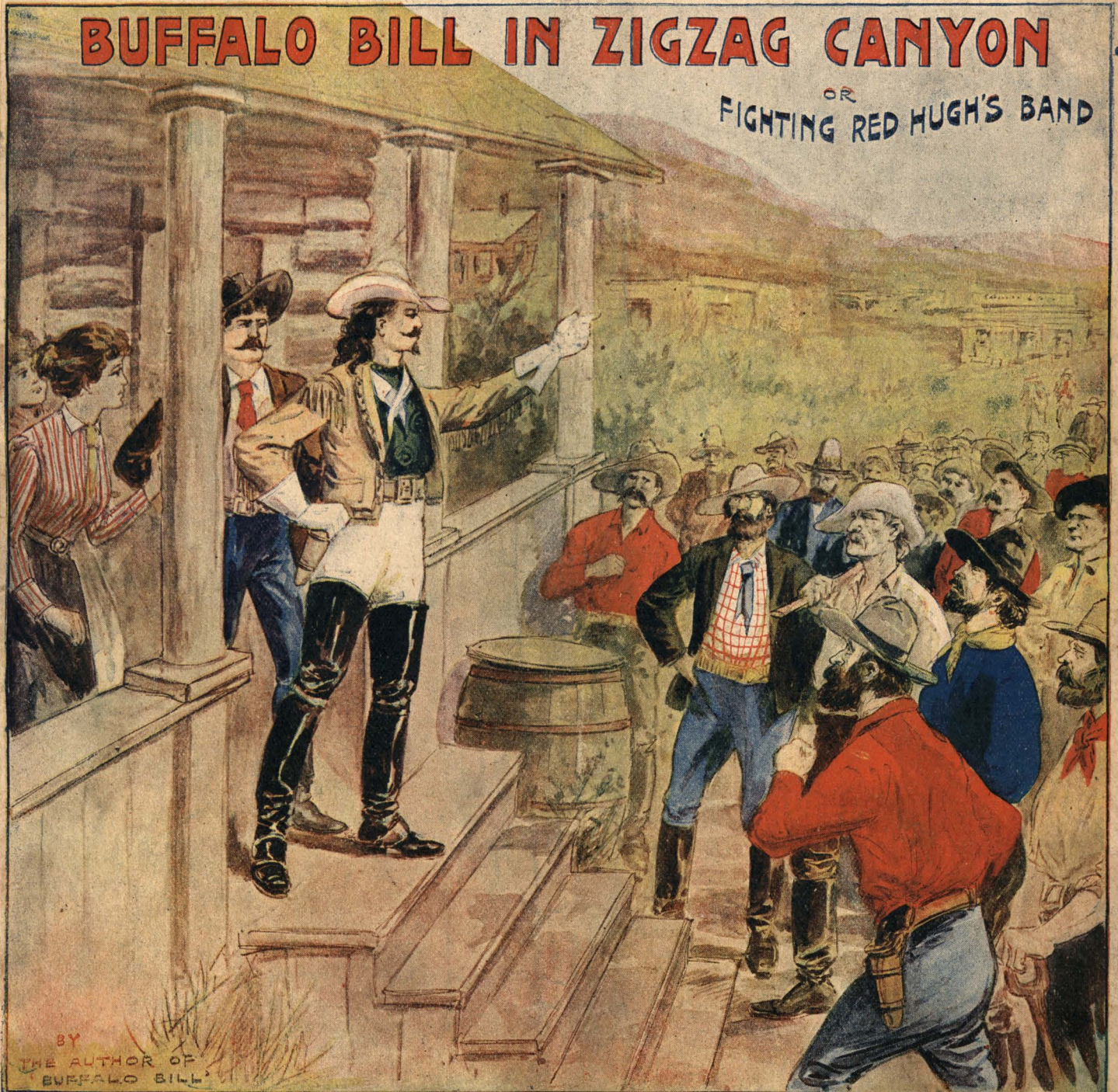
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No. 43.

Price, Five Cents.

## BUFFALO BILL IN ZIGZAG CANYON

OR  
FIGHTING RED HUGH'S BAND



BY  
THE AUTHOR OF  
'BUFFALO BILL'

"THE MAN WHO DOES NOT GIVE ME THIS PLEDGE A GOWARD, AND SO I BRAND HIM!" WAS BUFFALO BILL'S DEFIANT RESPONSE TO THE MOB.





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No. 43.

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## BUFFALO BILL IN ZIGZAG CANYON;

OR,

## Fighting Red Hugh's Band.

By the author of "BUFFALO BILL."

### CHAPTER I.

#### ON SPECIAL DUTY.

Buffalo Bill had been sent by the commandant of Fort Worth to perform a special duty, and in a mining country a long distance away from the military post where he was chief of scouts.

News had come from a well-to-do miner, of influence and a friend of Colonel Loomis, that a number of deserters from the army were in the mines, and had added greater terrors to the camps and the would-be honest element, while bloodshed, gambling, robbing, drinking and man-killing were the amusements of the tough elements.

The letter went on to say that there were several desperate leaders of the desperadoes. If they were killed or arrested, it would bring about a change in the disgraceful affairs at Miner's Mountain, as the locality was known.

Colonel Loomis held a consultation with his officers, and though all were willing to go there if ordered, they said to a man: "Buffalo Bill is the man to go. If he cannot do the work it is a hopeless case."

So Buffalo Bill, chief of scouts at Fort Worth, was sent for, Miner Turner's letter was read to him, with the appeal of a few good men for help, and he was asked:

"Will you go, Cody?"

"Certainly, sir, if you wish it."

"I do; but it is to face the deadliest kind of work."

"Yes, sir."

"You have to handle these fellows without gloves, you know."

"Yes, sir, I think I know all that they are for I have been in mountain mining camps before."

"I will let you pick a sergeant, two corporals and sixteen men, and you know what men you want."



"I know who to depend upon, colonel."

"If you need more, send a courier for them, and I'll send fifty men."

"I can take two of my scouts, sir?"

"Oh yes, all you wish; but I thought men in uniform would have more weight in that crowd."

"I think so, sir, and two scouts will be enough."

"You can rely upon Miner Turner, you know, for aid, and he can tell you the good men and true who are there."

"Yes, sir."

"I am sorry to learn that Turner's daughter, who was brought up in the mines, but who has been at school in Chicago the past two years, has returned to live with her father, while she has a girl friend with her on a visit. They must be shocked at the wild life they see there."

"It is no place for a woman, sir, and I guess they'll get tired of it soon; but when shall I leave?"

"When you please."

"I will start within a week, sir," and as Buffalo Bill left the headquarters the colonel said to his adjutant:

"He is the only man to send, for he can do the work. I might send a troop of cavalry and a dozen officers, but they could not meet that terribly desperate element as Buffalo Bill can. I really believe that the man bears a charmed life."

It was just two weeks after his talk with Colonel Loomis that Buffalo Bill rode into a pleasant camping place under the shadow of Miner's Mountain, a picked body of men under his command, armed, equipped, and prepared to carry out his orders to the bitter end.

He waited until nightfall before he went to the large cabin of Miner Turner, whom he knew, as he did his daughter, Lou, whom he had once rescued from kidnapers when she was but fourteen.

The welcome the great scout received made him feel at home, while he was surprised to see that Lou Turner had grown to be a very lovely young lady, not in the least spoiled, while her friend, Margaret Montgomery, was also a pretty girl, full of life, a fair Texan, who could ride, shoot and throw a lasso with deadly aim.

From the valley home of Miner Turner, leaving his soldiers in camp, Buffalo Bill went to the Gold Brick saloon, just to get acquainted, he said.

The Gold Brick was in full blast, and that meant that gambling and drinking held full sway.

One man had just been killed as Buffalo Bill entered, and a poor cripple was making for the door as fast as he could, to escape the desperado who had killed his partner and threatened to mark him for life by cutting off his ears.

"Oh, sir, don't let him brand me, for I had to call him a coward when he killed my friend."

Thus appealed to by the cripple, Buffalo Bill said:

"No one shall harm you—none but a coward would wish to do so."

The words checked the hum of conversation and turned every eye upon Cody.

They checked the advance of Red Hugh, the man who was in chase of the cripple.

All were amazed, Red Hugh particularly so.

A stranger had dared to "chip in" against Red Hugh, known as the Devil Desperado, for he always insisted upon meeting an enemy in a fair duel.

He had his knife in his hand now, in order to carry out his threat to slit Cripple Jonah's ears.

"Did I hear correctly, sir, that you called me a coward?" cried Red Hugh, a man who had a huge red birthmark upon his otherwise good-looking face.

"If you were the one who threatened this poor cripple, you are a coward and worse," was Buffalo Bill's response.

"He's the one; Red Hugh they call him, because the Lord has put his red hand upon him. But he's a devil, so look out!" said Cripple Jonah.

"You are a stranger here, I believe?" asked Red Hugh, amid a deathlike silence.

"Oh, no, I feel at home anywhere."

That's Buffalo Bill, the scout, Pard Hugh—look out, for he's a deadly hand," called out a voice.

"Are you the scout, Buffalo Bill?"

"I answer to that name."

"Then you have made a mistake to come here."

"Why so?"

"Because you will find your grave here."

"If you are the one who intends to dig it, set to work."

"You called me a coward."

"Which you are."

"Well, you shall apologize or fight."

"I shall not apologize for telling the truth."

"Then you shall fight."

"Who, when and where?"

"Me, now and here."

"All right."



Just then a form stepped forward and said calmly: "This looks like pressing matters a little too far, gentlemen, and I will ask to take my friend's place at this meeting, as I know Red Hugh has a grudge against me he would like to square."

The speaker was Hugh Turner, the miner.

All knew him, and his record was a good one for pluck.

He had ever been most generous to his fellows, giving a helping hand to every man who needed aid, had never held himself as better than others, while, when put to the test, had shown himself fully capable of taking care of himself.

After an absence from the mines for some time, and returning with the name of being very rich, he had, so to speak, put on no airs, but had been the same noble-hearted man as before.

When Red Hugh had asked for the hand of Lou, Hugh Turner had turned livid and made the response:

"I would rather kill my child with my own hand than see her wedded to such as you, and if ever you dare to insult her again, it will be your life or mine, Red Hugh!"

Since that day, the two had never spoken, and that was what Hugh Turner alluded to, when he said that the desperado had a grudge against him he would like to settle.

Why Red Hugh had never resented the words of the miner was one of the mysteries no one could fathom.

The miner had followed Buffalo Bill up to the saloon, and had taken a position where he was not noticeable, so had seen and heard all that had passed.

Now he came up to the scout and boldly asked to take his place in the duel with Red Hugh.

All were surprised, for the miner was one to avoid a personal difficulty as far as lay honorably in his power to do so.

"You here, Mr. Turner?" exclaimed Buffalo Bill, in surprise.

"Yes, and I ask to take your place against that man."

"That I cannot think of."

"Well, if you do not kill him, he has to face me, and I'll avenge you. Permit me to be your second?"

"Certainly, and thank you."

Red Hugh, coming forward, said:

"Did I understand, Turner, that you wish to take this man's place in this duel?"

"So I said."

"Well, I am content to let you come first, if he is."

All noticed the significance with which the desperado pronounced the word "first!"

"But I am not, and as I come first, there will be no need of Miner Turner making useless plans to meet you."

The cool rejoinder of the scout created an impression upon all, for it showed that he spoke with significance also.

"Ah, you think so, do you, Buffalo Bill?" smiled the desperado, and turning to Dick Dashiell, he continued:

"Let me ask you, pard, if I may request two more friends to act with you?"

"Certainly, whom do you name?" returned Dick Dashiell, indifferently.

"Broncho Charlie and Silver Sam."

"Of the Owls gang?" said Hugh Turner aloud, while Dick Dashiell remarked in an emphatic tone:

"Good men, both of them."

"Come, pards, and we will arrange for another fatal meeting."

As the two men stepped out of the crowd and joined Dick Dashiell, Red Hugh said:

"One moment, please, Turner."

"What is it?"

"May I ask why you have come here to pick a quarrel with me to-night?"

"You have said aright, for I did come to seek a quarrel with you," was the quiet reply.

"And why?"

"This letter." Turner took a letter from his pocket and holding it up, continued:

"This letter, which you, a cowardly desperado, a cutthroat, and a fugitive from justice, dared to write to my daughter, as boldly as you asked her to become your wife."

"You have repeated the offense and I warned you when you did it, it would be your life or mine."

The desperado looked as though he was going to draw his revolver, but he knew that to shoot down Hugh Turner, if he could do so, would be to turn every miner against him.

So he asked:

"Where did you get that letter?"

"My daughter gave it to me with the remark that,



when she met you, she would lay her whip across your face for the insult."

"An insult to ask her to be my wife?"

"For such a creature as you are, yes."

"I will attend to you upon getting through with this man," and turning to his companion, he asked:

"Is all ready for the duel, Dick?"

"Yes, it is to take place to-night, and here."

## CHAPTER II.

### TREACHERY PUNISHED.

Gambling and drinking were forgotten in the more intense excitement of the duels, and the miners stood gazing at Buffalo Bill with an admiring awe for the man that was so utterly devoid of fear.

Red Hugh stepped to one side and held a minute's whispered conversation with Dick Dashiell. The latter was seen to shake his head, as though opposing his friend's intentions.

Then Red Hugh was heard to say:

"You know you are my heir, Dick—all I have going to you if I fall, only don't flatter yourself that you will get it soon, for I have not the remotest idea of dying; I feel in a mood to kill to-night."

"Come, Dick Dashiell, let us toss up for the word," said Turner.

"With pleasure," and the devil desperado stepped forward, took a gold coin from his pocket, and called out:

"Heads, or tails, Turner?"

"Heads."

Up went the coin, and fell. A chorus of voices called out: "Tails!"

"You have won the word, Dashiell."

"Yes."

Two of the others then stepped forward, and the principals were escorted to their places, Buffalo Bill walking slowly and his face showing signs of paleness, while he muttered to Dick Dashiell:

"Let us get through with this at once."

Dick Dashiell looked surprised, but made no reply, and the moment after called out in the professional tones of one who knew his business well and had been in such scenes himself:

"Are the gentlemen ready?"

"Ready!" answered the seconds nearest to the two adversaries.

"Right about, wheel!

"Forward!

"March!"

The commands rung out like those of an army officer on parade, and both men promptly obeyed.

"One, two!" and the steps were counted off until suddenly rang out the sharp report of Red Hugh's revolver, who had fired before the word, and gained a couple of seconds before his adversary's weapon was discharged.

But Red Hugh had been too eager to commit his act of treachery to kill Buffalo Bill ere he could fire.

His aim was unsteady and his bullet appeared to have missed its mark. A savage cry followed Buffalo Bill's shot, which shattered the hand that grasped the revolver, the weapon dropping to the floor from the shock.

But Red Hugh showed his claim to pluck and nerve, for in a second he had drawn his other revolver, and threw it forward and pulled the trigger.

All had seen Buffalo Bill lower his weapon from Red Hugh's head to his hand, when he shattered it, and then he had hesitated as though hoping that that would end the affair, for he could have fired a couple of shots before Hugh got hold of his other revolver.

The scout even took chances of a shot, for he pulled trigger only when his foe did.

Down in a heap went the desperado. Going quickly to his side, Dick Dashiell called out:

"Dead!"

It was a yell of admiration that now broke forth from the crowd.

Buffalo Bill said in a low tone:

"Now, Mr. Turner, let us go, for that first shot hit me in the side, and I am faint from loss of blood."

"And you have not spoken of this before—here, Bostwick, you are a physician, so see to my friend," cried the miner.

Bostwick, who was both a miner and the physician at Mountain City, came hastily forward—a tall, handsome fellow—and at once ordered a glass of liquor for the scout.

Then he threw open his clothing and saw a wound over the heart at the left side.

"Ah! well intended, but the bullet glanced on the rib, sir," he said, as he ran his probe into the wound.

"And here is the bullet—lodged here—I will cut it out," and Bostwick did so, the scout not flinching under the pain.

"It was a close call, but it is not dangerous, though



you have lost considerable blood, but I will dress the wound and in a short while you will be all right again."

"Thank you, sir," said Buffalo Bill, who was weak from the pain and loss of blood.

"I hope you are not seriously wounded, Mr. Cody?" said Dick Dashiell, coming forward.

"Thank you, the doctor says not, though I have bled so that I am weak."

"You were wounded by Hugh's first shot, I am told?"

"Yes, sir."

"You had nerve to face Red Hugh after that; but what became of his second shot?"

"It passed by my head and struck the wall."

"You shot to shatter his hand, I judge?"

"Yes, I seek to kill no man if it can be avoided."

"He deserved no mercy after his treachery in firing before the word; I should have shot him down for that," said Miner Turner.

"Yes, I expected you would do so, for it was treachery; he told me he intended to do so, and I warned him against it," said Dick Dashiell.

"How long, Bostwick, before you can have your patient well again?"

"In a week or ten days," answered the doctor.

"All right; I will wait the latter time."

"What for, Dick Dashiell?" suddenly asked Hugh Turner.

"Why, of course, I must not lose my laurels as the Desperado Duelist, and having killed my friend, Buffalo Bill will certainly give me a game, to see if he can hold trumps the second time."

"Do you mean that you intend to force a quarrel upon Buffalo Bill?" sternly asked Miner Turner.

"My dear Turner, there is to be no quarrel, simply a meeting, for he has killed my pard, Hugh, and I claim the right to avenge him, and to have a chance to hold my laurels as the gambler duelist or lose them with my life."

"Surely, Mr. Cody will not refuse me the favor."

Buffalo Bill smiled grimly, and replied:

"I did not expect to have a killing picnic when I came here, but the duelist fever has broken out, and as you seem to be suffering with the disease, I will oblige you, yes; now, if you so desire."

"No, no, I would consider it murder to kill you when you are suffering from your wound."

"In ten days we will settle it;" and Dick Dashiell

walked away, and lighting a cigar at the bar, had several men take up the body of Red Hugh and bear it to his cabin to prepare it for burial.

Refusing aid offered by a number to carry him to his camp, Buffalo Bill left the saloon, followed by the cheers of the crowd.

One miner had his horse there and insisted that Bill should ride him, sending him back in the morning, and Dr. Bostwick suggested that it would be best that he should do so.

As he really felt quite weak the scout consented, and, mounting, rode along the trail, Miner Turner walking by his side.

"You must be my guest to-night, Bill, for I have a spare cot for you in my room, and the girls would never forgive if you did not stop."

Thus urged by the miner, Buffalo Bill consented, and when they entered the cabin they found both Margaret and Lou up to receive them.

A miner had passed just an hour before and told them just what had occurred at the Gold Brick, and the way he praised Buffalo Bill would have caused him to blush like a schoolgirl if he had heard him.

"Well, I have been getting into trouble again, and at one time I felt very like calling on you ladies to help me out," said the scout, as he sunk into a chair.

A late supper had been prepared for the miner and the scout, for they expected the latter might stop by, and the two really enjoyed it, though it could be seen that Bill was weak and suffering. He soon retired, while Miner Turner made known to the young ladies the whole story of the affair.

"What a strange man the scout is!" said Margaret.

"He is as gentle as a woman, big hearted, generous and shuns trouble; but he is as deadly as death itself when forced to defend his life and discharge his duty."

"Yes, he is a strange combination of the lion and the lamb," remarked Lou.

"He has made a record here that will not soon be forgotten."

"Then if he can kill that desperado duelist, Dick Dashiell, he will have put down the element of discord, death and devilry we have here."

"But can he get rid of the desperado duelist, father, for you know the reputation he has?"

"Yes, Lou, and you know the name that reptile, Red Hugh, had, and you should have seen Bill shat-



ter his hand and then send a shot between his eyes—I tell you, nothing disturbs the scout's serenity."

"But Dick Dashiell has the same reputation for coolness and deadly aim, and you know about the pitcher that went once too often to the well, father."

"True, and my opinion is that Dick Dashiell will be the pitcher, Lou."

### CHAPTER III.

#### AN OUTLAW'S REMEMBRANCE.

Buffalo Bill awoke in the morning with a sickening remembrance of the scenes of the night before and the act which had been forced upon him.

He felt well, save for the stiffness and soreness of the wound and the gash cut to extract the bullet.

Dr. Bostwick was on hand to dress his wounds, and told him that they were doing well, he had no fever, and that in a few days he would be himself again.

The sergeant also called to see how he was, having heard the whole story, and said how delighted he would have been if he only could have gone up with his men and opened fire on the whole outfit.

"I might have killed some innocent men, sir, but it would have been upon the principle of being caught in bad company, while their loss would have been slight in comparison with the good done in thinning out the desperadoes."

"We cannot do the work by wholesale, sergeant," said Bill, with a smile.

"No, sir, I suppose not, but you are retailing them off in fine shape, if some stray bullet don't hit you."

"But I must take the chances, you know."

"It seems that more chances fall to your lot than there should be, sir."

"Keep your eyes open, then, and see that no one is allowed to come into camp."

"I will, sir; but I hear that you are to fight the great gambler, whom they call the desperado duelist."

"Yes, I am booked for it, I believe."

"He is a very desperate man, sir."

"So I have reason to believe."

"Can't I arrest him as a fugitive from justice, sir, and so end it?"

"Don't you know me better than that, sergeant?" reproachfully said Buffalo Bill.

"I was only thinking that you had done your share,

sir, and the fact of your other duel would prove that you were not afraid."

"Nor am I afraid of meeting two desperado duelists, sergeant. He demands a meeting and I must oblige him."

Breakfast was now ready, so Buffalo Bill went in and met Margaret and Lou.

They insisted upon treating him as an invalid, and he could not resist them, so was cared for during the day as tenderly as though he had been a sick child.

In the afternoon he strolled over to the camp, and was greeted by a cheer from the soldiers.

He found all well there, and on his way back saw a man in the timber, who beckoned to him.

Ever cautious, Buffalo Bill walked toward the man, ready to greet friend or foe.

The man was in miner dress, and crouched down behind a huge bowlder, surrounded by a thicket.

"Don't yer know me, pard?" he said, in a whisper.

Bill looked closely at him for a moment, and memory recalled the man's face from the dim past.

"Am I mistaken in saying that you were once in the army?"

"I was, sir, and you risked your life to take me off the field when I was wounded in an Indian fight."

"Yes, I remember now, and we met again."

"Yes, sir, and if I have not forgotten the first time you saved me, my memory is not so bad as to forget the second."

"I saved you from the Vigilantes, I recollect."

"You did, sir, for they had me up as a horse thief, and were going to hang me."

"I was not guilty, but they thought so, and were going to hang me when you vouched for me."

"Yes; though I knew you had deserted, I did not wish to see you hanged when I felt you were innocent of that crime, at least."

"I'll tell you, sir, I deserted to go home to my dying mother, for I could not get leave."

"It's a pity I did, sir, for she left me a snug little sum, which I ran through in a couple of years, prompted by my conscience, which troubled me for deserting."

"Had I served out my time in the army, all would have been well; but I didn't, and it put me on the road to ruin."

"I came West, and began to redeem myself, when I was robbed of all I had laid by, and, becoming a



wanderer, I was picked up by the Vigilantes as a horse thief.

"You saved my neck, sir, and then I turned to mining.

"I did well, but got an idea I could make money faster by gambling, so I lost it all in a night.

"Then I became discouraged, and the evil in me got the better hand, so I joined the Owls."

"Ah! you are one of that desperado gang, are you?"

"Yes, sir.

"There are but seven of us left now, and it is of them I am going to tell you, for, as I have said, I have not forgotten you, Mr. Cody."

"Well?"

"The Owls met last night, and doomed you to death."

"A threatened man lives long, pard."

"Yes, sir, but they have planned to kill you, and I know the plan."

Buffalo Bill looked the self-confessed outlaw squarely in the face.

"You know the plot to kill me?" he repeated, as the man did not flinch under his gaze.

"Yes, sir, and that is what I am going to tell you."

"Forewarned is being forearmed, pard."

"That is it, and I wish to pay off the debt of life I owe you."

"I appreciate it, and can help you in return."

"I do not wish that, sir, for I am twice a debtor to you now."

"Well, if you could, for services rendered me, get a pardon for desertion, and be allowed to serve out your time on the army, it would put you on the high road to start on an honest life once more."

"It would, sir, and happy would I be if I could do so."

"That rests with you, for I am sure you can get a pardon, and be allowed to serve out your time."

"I hope so, sir, for when I left as I did I had not drawn my pay for four years, preferring to get it all at the time that I left, so it would be quite a nest egg for me."

"It would, indeed; but now about this plot to kill me?"

"You will be riding down to the Miner's Delight mine of Mr. Turner?"

"Yes."

"You will go through what they call the Zigzag Cañon, on account of its devious course?"

"Yes."

"Well, sir, a man is to be kept on the watch for you, and when you go he will notify the Owls, and they will hasten to the center of the cañon and go into ambush."

"Yes, it is a fine place for that kind of work."

"They will lasso you, drag you from your horse and then hang you; that's the plan."

"Of course, I am to be along, for not a soul suspects me; but, warning you as I do, I can now keep you out of the trap, for you won't go."

Buffalo Bill was silent for a moment, and a strange expression crept over his face, as he was lost in thought.

At last he spoke, and said:

"Pard, I will consider that you wish to be honest, and so look upon you. Do any of your comrades wear a hat like yours?"

"No, sir; only one like this came out to the store in the lot, and I bought it," and the man took off his hat, which was of red felt.

"All right; you stick to that hat when you go to ambush me in the cañon, and I won't forget it."

"Let me also tell you that I will go to the Miner's Delight mine the day after to-morrow, in the afternoon, and your shadower of me can so report to the Owls."

"You certainly will not go, now that I have warned you!"

"I certainly will; but I won't forget that you wear a red sombrero, or one that was red before it became so soiled."

"They will kill you, sir, for I can do nothing; if I pleaded for you they would quickly consider me a traitor, and make short work of me."

"I'll take all chances on the killing, and, what is more, I will not expect you to say a word on my behalf, nor will I do or say anything to betray you for your kindness to me."

"If I remember, your name is Jessop?"

"Yes, sir; Jim Jessop."

"All right, Jessop; stick to your good resolution, and I will not desert you."

"Now, don't forget that I go to the mine, passing through Zigzag Cañon, day after to-morrow, in the afternoon."

"Yes, sir," and the man looked a trifle bewildered,



but, after a few more words, Buffalo Bill went on to the miner's cabin.

Miner Turner had a dozen claims, nearly all of which were paying well, and he had asked Buffalo Bill to look after one for him each day while he was there, noting the returns, as he had not the time to go the rounds of all, and he was preparing to sell his interests in the valley, and wished to know just what the production of each one was.

This mine was apart from the others, and half-a-dozen miles away.

No other was near it, and the dozen miners who worked it camped near it, and, excepting them and the owner, no one else ever went through Zigzag Cañon.

There was plenty of game beyond the cañon, and Miner Turner felt that Buffalo Bill would also enjoy a hunt while doing him a service.

Zigzag Cañon was a crevice in the rocks, half-a-mile in length, very narrow, and with huge slabs, squares and pieces of rocks, fallen from the cliff, strewing the way on either side.

It was near the center of the cañon that James Jessop had told the scout was the place selected for ambuscade, and certainly a good place it was for just such work.

In spite of the warning given him, Buffalo Bill did not seem to fear danger, for upon the second day, as he had said, after dinner he mounted his horse and rode in the direction of Miner's Delight Mine.

He rode through Zigzag Cañon very slowly, took in all the good situations for an ambush, and then continued on to the mine.

His wounds were still sore, but rapidly healing, and he felt even then ready for a death struggle, should it come to that, though, of course, he was weak from the loss of blood on the night of his duel.

After an hour spent talking with the foreman at the Miner's Delight Mine, he mounted his horse and calmly rode away, entering Zigzag Cañon apparently without fear.

#### CHAPTER IV.

##### SURPRISED!

Buffalo Bill rode leisurely along through Zigzag Cañon, the expression on his face a study for any one who had been there to behold it.

He scanned the rocks ahead, though he did not ap-

pear to be watchful, and rode along with his hands resting on the horns of his saddle the rein hanging loose, his horse at a walk.

He was nearing the spot he had selected, when passing through several hours before, as the very place for an ambush, and a grim smile flitted over his face.

A moment later there came a puff of smoke from over the top of a bowlder, the report of a rifle, and his horse fell heavily, shot through the head.

At the same instant came flying toward him two snakelike coils, and the nooses of a couple of lassoes settled over the head and shoulders of the scout.

He was pinioned in the toils, as he caught nimbly on his feet when his horse went down under him.

To draw a revolver with his arms thus pinioned by the lariats, without a considerable struggle, would have been impossible.

Besides, he had heard the stern command:

"Resist, and you are a dead man, Buffalo Bill!"

The scout had not attempted any resistance.

The killing of his horse seemed to be a surprise to him, but he had simply caught on his feet and made not the slightest effort to resist. He serenely faced the gang of men who now dashed out from among the rocks and surrounded him.

"Well, pards, you have got me foul," he said, quietly, as he gazed over the mass of faces.

"Yer bet we has got yer foul, Buffalo Bill, and we intends ter run ther game out," said the leader, whom the scout now recognized as one of the seconds of Red Hugh in his duel.

"What game are you playing?"

"The game of death, and we holds trumps!"

Buffalo Bill smiled, and his eyes met those of the man in the red hat. He showed no sign of recognition.

Jessop seemed ill at ease, and was very pale.

"Do you know that I am a government officer?"

"We don't mind that, nor care for the government."

"What do you want with me, for I haven't got much money with me?"

"What you has got, we wants; but that hain't all."

"What else?"

"Revenge!"

"What for?"

"The killin' of our cap'n, Red Hugh."

"Well, play your game, so I can see your hands."



"Yer takes it cool, but that won't save yer."

"What will?"

"Nothin'."

"Do you intend to kill me?"

"Yer bets we does, for ef we didn't our lives wouldn't be worth nothin'."

"When am I to die?"

"Now, fer we has all the arrangements made. Does yer see that tree?"

The thug pointed to a lightning-riven pine, growing among the rocks, which leaned half-over the cañon.

Hanging over the limb of it was a lasso, a small noose in one end, the other held by one of the outlaws.

"Yes, I see it."

"Well, thar you has got to hang."

"All right; start the game, so I can play my hand."

The men looked at the scout in surprise, and then at each other.

He was as cool as an icicle, and had shown not an atom of fear at the fate he was threatened with; though they meant to hang him, he had not the slightest doubt.

"Say, pards, I guess that we'd better let up after all, now that we've given him a scare," said Jim Jessop, anxiously.

"Let up nothin'! He dies!"

"Put that noose over his neck—oh, God!"

The cry of the ringleader was choked by the death-rattle, as a bullet pierced his heart, for a shot rang out, with many an echo in the cañon, and around the bend in each direction dashed a party of men.

One was led by Carrolton, a scout, and consisted of four miners from Miner's Delight mine, while the others, coming from the direction of Mountain Mines, were half-a-dozen troopers under the lead of Sergeant Dale.

The outlaws were surprised beyond expression, but, seeing their leader fall, and expecting no mercy, they seized their revolvers and opened fire.

"Fall where you are, close to me!"

The order was given by the scout, and in a low tone, but it reached the ears of the one to whom it was addressed, James Jessop.

Quickly he obeyed, and his comrades, seeing him fall, supposed he was killed.

Quickly they sprang to the shelter of the rocks,

and opened a hot fire on the troopers in one direction, and the miners led by Carrolton on the other.

There was no avenue of escape for them, and they firmly stood their ground to fight to the end, for the felt that they might expect the hangman's noose if they escaped the bullet.

The troopers and miners labored under the disadvantage of not daring to return the fire for fear of killing their chief and the man in the red sombrero, for Bill had warned them that he was not to be hurt under any circumstances.

Quietly had the scout arranged the trap, sending Carrolton to the Miner's Delight mine early in the morning, to reconnoiter the Zigzag Cañon.

When Carrolton got there he found that he had a party of miners ready to aid him in entrapping the outlaws.

The sergeant and his men were told to come into the Zigzag Cañon at such a time, and prompt had they been in obeying.

Rushing upon the outlaws, Carrolton and his men, with the sergeant and his troopers, had a short, sharp hand-to-hand fight of it.

"Spare those who cry for mercy!" cried Buffalo Bill, but, though he repeated the command several times, in the fierce onslaught he was unheard. Two of the troopers had been shot down, wounded, a couple of miners had been killed, and Carrolton and the sergeant had each received a slight wound, so that blood was up to the fighting heat, and the combat ended only when the last of the outlaws had been slain.

"Wiped out!" said Buffalo Bill.

"I had to fire, chief, when I saw that fellow drop the noose around your neck; but it saved expense to shoot them," said Carrolton, the scout, wiping the blood from a wound in his chest, while the sergeant came up, nursing a wound in his arm, and reported:

"Two of Scout Carrolton's party killed, sir, and two of my men wounded, but not seriously, I hope, with scratches for the scout and myself."

"And the band wiped out!—you have all done well, sergeant."

"Now, free me of my bonds," said Buffalo Bill.

Bound with the lariats, Buffalo Bill had stood calmly watching the conflict, his eagle eyes taking in each phase of the situation.

He had noted the reckless dash of Scout Carrolton and his miners, and, though regretting that



there had been two valuable lives lost, and several men wounded, for the outlaws at bay had fought desperately, he could not but feel that a very bad lot of desperados had been wiped out. It was worth the sacrifice, for the Owls had been the dread of all honest men in the camp, and it was said that the most lawless deeds were traceable to them.

A secret band originally, they had gained such power through the fear they inspired, that they made no great effort to conceal who they were, and even the Vigilantes dared not attack them as a band.

When freed of his bonds, Bill said:

"Tie this man at my feet, for he is not dead, but lay down at my orders.

"He is to be kept a prisoner in camp until we leave the valley.

"Sergeant, let one of the miners here have one of your horses to ride after Dr. Bostwick, and have him at our camp by the time we get there.

"They shot my horse, you see, and I would surely have been hanged but for my rescue, which, of course, I relied upon, and so made no resistance."

One of the men from the Miner's Delight then hastily mounted the horse of a trooper and rode off to get the doctor, and leave word for the bodies of the outlaws to be sent for.

Turning to Jim Jessop, who was deathly pale at the fate he had escaped, Buffalo Bill said:

"It will be best to keep you a prisoner until we leave the mines, for there may be friends of the outlaws, who, suspecting you to be a traitor, would kill you."

"Oh, yes, sir; I am in your hands, and let all believe I am really a prisoner," urged the man, who was awed by his escape, for, after warning the scout of his danger, he had feared that after all he had been entrapped and would be hanged.

Bound by one of the troopers, he was led down the cañon to where the horses had been left, and then, with the scout, sergeant, Carrolton and the wounded soldiers, he mounted and rode on to the camp, several of the troopers and miners remaining with the dead bodies of the outlaws.

Just as they reached the camp, Dr. Bostwick rode up with the miner who had gone after him, and Miner Turner, who had been told of the fight in Zigzag Cañon.

"My dear pard, again you have escaped—a special

Providence seems to protect you," cried Hugh Turner, grasping Bill's hand.

"Oh, I was all right, sir, for I had it arranged so that there was little danger."

"And you were captured by the Owls?"

"Yes, they shot my horse and lassoed me, for I made no resistance, so, doctor, you will not have to do your work over again so far as I am concerned."

"I am glad of it, for a struggle would have made it bad for you; but I'll look after your men now," and the miner doctor turned to the sergeant, who said:

"Mine is slight, sir, so look after my boys."

"Why did you not ask me to aid you, Bill?" reproachfully asked Miner Turner.

"I did not wish you to become involved in any trouble here, sir, that might work against you with the community, though I did get some of your men from Miner's Delight to aid me, and their being there will convince the men of the valley that the outlaws got just what they deserved."

"Yes, and my fondest anticipations had not been for such a result—only one of the gang left."

"Don't censure him, Mr. Turner, for he saved my life, for he it was who gave the warning, for we are old pards, and I only now hold him a prisoner as a blind. He goes back to the fort with me and re-enters the army, for he is a deserter, and has not led the life of a saint since; but, then, he will come out all right in the end."

"I am glad to hear this, and will keep his secret; but I do wish that the meeting with Dick Dashiell could be avoided."

"It may be best to continue the wiping-out business while my hand is in, Mr. Turner," said Buffalo Bill, with a smile, but with no bravado of manner.

"Now, let us see how our boys are."

The report of the doctor was encouraging. One of the soldiers had been wounded in the shoulder, but not seriously, and another in the hip, an ugly-looking flesh wound, yet not dangerous.

Carrolton's wound in the face was soon stitched up, and the doctor said it would not leave much of a scar. The sergeant had a bullet through the fleshy part of the arm, but the bone was not hurt.

"All Mountain City is going out to the cañon, so I will go, too, and give my version of the affair, while you go up to the cabin, Bill, and show the girls that you are not wounded. You need rest, too," said Mr.



Turner, and, mounting his horse, he rode off with the corporal and a couple of soldiers, who were going to the cañon after their comrades left there, while the scout went on up to the cabin, and in his modest way related the story of the affair to Margaret and Lou.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE DESPERADO DUELLIST.

There was a large crowd of miners who visited the Zigzag Cañon that afternoon, and many breathed more freely when they heard that the Owls had been wiped out, all save one.

There were many questions as to, who that one was, and dark threats were made about taking him out and hanging him, so that not one of the gang would be left.

Miner Turner had told the story over and over again, as he knew it, and his word went a long way with some.

Then, too, the miners who had come up from Miner's Delight, and were participants in the fight, told how Buffalo Bill had been on the point of being hung when they came up.

In some way, it was said, the scout had overheard the plot to entrap him, and had plotted to surprise the plotters.

The verdict of the miners was that the outlaws should be buried right where they fell, in Zigzag Cañon, and the two men from the mine who had fallen in the battle should be borne to Mountain City and buried with honor on the day following, which was the Sabbath day, when most all knocked off work, and took it as a day of rest and recreation.

Several had made remarks in the crowd about Buffalo Bill's coming there to leave a red trail behind him, and that he should be halted, as he had gone far enough, but the response that they met with quickly silenced the lawless ones.

They began to feel that outlawry was getting a black eye in the mountain camps.

Those inclined to make ugly remarks were further silenced by the shout that rose to go to the soldiers' camp and hang the one who was left of the outlaw band.

The soldiers had returned to their camp, and Miner Turner had gone back to his home, and was seated upon the piazza with Margaret, Lou and Buf-

falo Bill, when a horseman was seen approaching at a run.

He was splendidly mounted upon a jet-black horse, his bridle and saddle were silver-mounted, and he rode superbly.

A man of fine form and handsome face, he was one to command admiration, especially as he was dressed in a stylish riding suit, military boots, with spurs, a Mexican, gold-embroidered sombrero, white silk shirt, with a black scarf, knotted under the broad collar, and wore a ring and breastpin worth a small fortune.

"What a splendid-looking man," cried Margaret, as he came along the trail.

"And how well he rides."

"It is Dick Dashiel, the desperado duelist and gambler," said Lou.

"What! that man a desperado, Mr. Turner?"

"Yes, Miss Margaret, he is so called, and yet he is no common one, for he is a gentleman in appearance, and man of education, with refined tastes, yet a professional gambler.

"He holds himself aloof from those who are desperadoes in the common acceptance of the term, yet he has killed more men than any man in the mines, and he is brave and chivalrous beyond a doubt, but as dangerous as death—see, he is coming here."

As the miner spoke, Dick Dashiel wheeled out of the valley trail and came on up to the cabin, but at a slower pace.

Reining his horse to a halt, he bent low and gracefully in a salute to Margaret and Lou, while he said, courteously:

"I have not before had the opportunity, Miss Turner, to welcome you back, though long ago we were friends."

"Thank you, Dick Dashiel," said Lou, in her old way of speaking.

"It is a pleasure to get back, I assure you. Let me present you to my friend, Miss Montgomery."

He sat on his horse, with head uncovered still, and, bowing low, said:

"It is a pleasure to meet any friend of the Mascot of Miner's Mountain, Miss Montgomery, especially for one, who, like myself, is an outcast and wears the indelible brand of a desperado.

"Miner Turner, I congratulate you upon having your daughter and her friend with you, and, Mr. Cody, I sincerely hope you are rapidly improving,



while I may offer you my congratulations also on your escape a few hours ago."

"Thank you, sir; had I not been prepared, it would have gone hard with me," politely replied Buffalo Bill, while both Margaret and Lou regarded the man with sad surprise that he, fitted by nature to adorn any society, and command admiration and respect, should be what he was.

From the same motive which had prompted Lou Turner to present him to Margaret Montgomery, Miner Turner now said:

"Will you not dismount, Dashiell, and join us, for supper will be ready after a while, and you know my latchstring hangs outside for my friends."

"For your friends, yes, Mr. Turner," was the bitter reply.

"But I have not the honor of such a claim, though you and the Mascot were wont to be ever kind to me in the long ago.

"I am what I am, and, though wicked now, I was not always so, and I knew full well when I first saw you that you came not here to hide from justice, that you were not one of the outcast kind, and so I never pressed my company upon you, nor did I force myself upon you to welcome Miss Lou back again, though God knows I am glad of the sunshine of her presence here, for we are all better for it.

"I am not here to seek hospitality, but to warn Mr. Cody that the miners are so pleased with his work of extermination that they are all anxious to do more, so are coming to take his prisoner away from him, and hang him!"

"Ha! is this so?" cried Miner Turner.

"It is, sir, and for it to be done would detract from the honor Mr. Cody has won here, and be a blow at the government to take its prisoners from United States troops, so I come to give you warning and offer my services in aiding Mr. Cody to stand the mob off."

The tidings brought by the desperado duelist were startling in the extreme.

To have his prisoners taken from him and lynched would dim the honor of his victory over vice and bring the army into contact with the miners.

It would never do, Buffalo Bill fully understood, and from his inmost heart he thanked the miner for the warning given him.

Of course, to resist, with the mob at fever heat,

would bring on a conflict, a few soldiers against hundreds of desperate men.

But Buffalo Bill would resist, and he said:

"See here, Pard Dashiell, you have done a very friendly act toward me, and I assure you I appreciate it.

"And, more, I will accept your kind offer of aiding me, for well I know your influence here."

"I am at your service, and you have about twenty minutes to prepare, I should say, for the crowd is afoot, you know."

"Then we will go at once."

"And I with you," said Hugh Turner.

"Father!"

"Yes, Lou?"

"There are twenty soldiers, I believe, two scouts, Buffalo Bill, who, with yourself and Dick Dashiell, make twenty-five."

"Yes, yes."

"There are hundreds of miners, and they will not readily be intimidated, and that means bloodshed and the lives of many."

"Yes, for the prisoner must be protected."

"Bring that prisoner here, beneath your roof, and leave the defense to me."

"To you, child?"

"Yes, to Margaret and myself."

"Lou, are you mad?"

"No, Miner Turner, she is right; for the Mascot can save him, and without bloodshed, whereas we might be overwhelmed, as you well know—yes, let the young ladies face these infuriated men, anxious to wipe out the lawless element, now that Buffalo Bill has set the example, and, in fact, they may wish to include me, for you know I am called a desperado," and the gambler spoke bitterly.

"I believe Mr. Dashiell is right, sir, in leaving the mob to Miss Lou," said Buffalo Bill.

"She can control them, I am sure," Margaret said, and Bill remarked:

"What do you say, Mr. Turner?"

"I believe you are right.

"We will bring the prisoner here," and the three men at once started to the camp after the prisoner.

It was not long before they returned, with Jessop in irons, and accompanied by two soldiers as guards.

They were taken at once into Miner Turner's



room, and, as the door closed, the head of the crowd came in sight and started for the soldiers' camp.

The sergeant met them, and in answer to the demand for the prisoner told them that he had been taken away.

He did not mind a search of the camp, and told them that their commander, Buffalo Bill, could be found in the cabin of Miner Turner, upon the hill.

All the crowd had now come, and to the cabin they went, the more enraged because they saw that a plan had been formed to prevent them getting possession of the prisoner.

Seated upon the piazza were the miner, his daughter and Margaret, Buffalo Bill and Dick Dashiell.

Up came the crowd, and the spokesman at once called out:

"Miner Turner, where is our prisoner?"

"What prisoner, Scott?" asked the miner, quietly.

"The last of the band of wiped-out Owls."

"He is Buffalo Bill's prisoner."

"Well, he began the good work of purifying Mountain City, and we intend to keep it up, so where is he?"

"What is your wish with him?"

"To hang him."

"My friends, he is a government prisoner, and in my keeping," said Buffalo Bill.

"Well, we know all that; but we intend to hang any lawless man we can get hold of this night in the valley, and there sits one who ought to go, yes, and must," and he pointed to Dick Dashiell, whose smile never changed as he sat quietly twirling the ends of his moustache.

"Well, pards, as I am the keeper of the prisoner, I must ask you to let me deal with him."

"No, Buffalo Bill, he hangs this night."

"We don't want trouble with you or Miner Turner, but take him we will," and a wild shout greeted the determined words of the leader.

"Do you wish trouble with me, Scott?" and Lou Turner stepped in front of the man.

"No, Miss Lou, for you hain't in this powwow."

"You are mistaken, for I am in it, as you will very soon find if you attempt to force your way into my house and take men from beneath this roof."

"For shame, for how can I say to my friend here that you are men of honor, in spite of your rough ways and wild life?"

"She came here with me in perfect trust in you, on

my word that you were true as steel to your friends, and now you wish to drag a prisoner out from beneath this roof and hang him!

"Why did you not find them out before, yes, and hunt them down, and not wait until brave Buffalo Bill has done it? but now, when the prisoner is in irons and harmless, you seek to tear him from him, because you have the numbers, the brute strength to do it?"

"Is this what I must expect from you, Scott—you and your mad followers?"

She had spoken fearlessly and spiritedly, and now, as she ceased speaking, the effect of her words was observed at once, for a deep roar went up:

"No! no! it shall not be done, Mascot Lou!"

Scott saw that he had lost, so made the best of it by saying:

"We yield to you, Miss Lou, for you wins the game; but there sits one who is not a prisoner, whom all fear, and he shall hang for it this night," and he pointed directly at Dick Dashiell, the desperado duelist.

## CHAPTER VI.

### BUFFALO BILL CHIPS IN.

Backed by an enormous crowd, bent on purifying the camps of their bad characters, Scott had grown very bold.

He was not one who would have dared confront Dick Dashiell on other occasions, but now he felt that he had might and right on his side.

He remembered how the gambler duelist had won a large sum of money from him once, and had killed his best friend, who had accused him of cheating.

Now was his time to square the two debts.

The prisoner, in the hands of a government officer, would be safe, but Dick Dashiell was at large, boldly seated before them, when all others in the camps, whose lives were crowded with crime, were in hiding until the cyclone of vengeance should blow over.

They, the honest men, had risen in their might, and the tares must be sifted from the wheat, the dirt divided from the gold.

Many liked Dick Dashiell, but all feared him.

What good qualities he possessed were outweighed by the evil deeds he was known to be guilty of.



Such was the argument of Leader Scott, and his opinion was joined in with by many.

"Of course, Lou would not attempt to protect him from them.

"What is your wish with me, gentlemen?" asked Dick Dashiell in the coolest of tones. He never changed a muscle, never rose from his seat.

"To hang you!"

"That is flatfooted, at least, Scott.

"I never suspected you of drinking before, but certainly you have been imbibing to get the Dutch courage you possess to-night."

"You'll feel what I've been doing, Dick Dashiell, when I put the rope around your neck to-night."

Dick Dashiell felt his neck in the most indifferent manner possible, and said:

"I do not wish to make a scene in the presence of ladies, so fall back with your gang, and I'll come up to Mountain City and let you hang me, but there will be some of you, now in good health, who will not be present at the hanging."

"You'll not come, but run away."

"My worst foe never called me a coward, Scott.

"If you wish me you must do as I say."

"You will beg the Mascot and her friend to come with you and save you."

"I never hide behind a woman, sir.

"Go, and I will follow you."

"Lou Turner had been listening to all that was said, and she heard Margaret's low-whispered words:

"To save him may be to have him kill Buffalo Bill.

"What can be done, Lou?"

That question was just what she had been asking herself.

She admired the magnificent pluck of the man, and did not wish to have him dragged away like a dog.

She had glanced toward her father, but he seemed to studiously avoid her eye, and his thoughts seemed to be the same as those of Margaret and herself.

If saved, might not the desperado duelist kill Buffalo Bill?

Could Buffalo Bill again meet with his phenomenal luck when facing such a man as was Dick Dashiell?

But at last she decided to make the effort to save him, and then to seek Dick Dashiell afterward and demand, by what she had done for him, that he should not fight his duel with the scout.

She was just about to rise and once more face the crowd, to try her influence upon them, when suddenly Buffalo Bill rose and stepped forward.

He had been most serene through all, and his face was now unruffled, but his words came distinctly, and were heard by every man in the large crowd.

"See here, pards, you have been playing a bluff game, for men who hold no trumps, and I advise you to pass," said Buffalo Bill.

"In the first place, you wish a victim because you are in a hanging mood, and, forgetting the courtesy due ladies, wish to drag their guest off and hang him.

"He has told you what he would do, and you appear to fear him too much to let him fight for his life, a right every man has.

"If you trust him, and leave him to follow, I go with him, for I will not give up my claim until you have won it from me, and I hold the prior right to Dick Dashiell, as he has challenged me to fight a duel with him, and he has got to meet me, and your wishing to hang him is not going to deprive me of my chance to kill him, so just go your way, and at the proper time you will see us both report for duty at the Gold Brick, and the best man will win the game."

Buffalo Bill had not uttered a dozen words before he saw that he had the crowd coming his way.

When he concluded his pointed remarks, there came a roar of applause, and Scott cried:

"We pass, Buffalo Bill, and the game is yours.

"We'll be there to see the duel, and if he kills you that will be his last act on earth."

"No, no, that shall not be, for that would be cowardly, and you are not cowards.

"That man has done you no harm, for I have heard how he has befriended many of you, has cared for your sick, has helped poor miners back to their homes, and protected many a man from death at the hands of desperadoes.

"A dangerous man he may be, one who has taken life upon life, but he is not like the despicable, cowardly creatures you should long ago have rid your camps of, not waited for strangers to do the work for you.

"Now, give me your pledge that, if in his meeting with me he kills me, you harm him not, but allow him to go as free as before in your midst.

"The man who does not give me this pledge is a coward, and so I brand him!"



There was no mistaking these ringing words, and the penetrating eyes of Buffalo Bill seemed to rest on each man in the crowd.

One moment of silence, and then burst forth a roar like thunder, as several hundred voices cried together:

"We pledge you, Buffalo Bill!"

"Men, now will I show my trust in your pledge," and, with a bow to the ladies, and a wave of the hand to Buffalo Bill, Dick Dashiell stepped to the edge of the piazza, where his horse stood, threw himself in the saddle and rode away slowly in the midst of the crowd.

With hearty cheers for Buffalo Bill, the Mascot Lou, Margaret, and Miner Turner, the crowd swayed back from the cabin and went down the hill in the gathering twilight, while back to the ears of those on the piazza came cheers also for Dick Dashiell, showing how Buffalo Bill and the gambler duelist's own trust in them had turned the tide against him from hatred to admiration.

"But will they spare him?" asked Margaret, anxiously.

"Indeed they will," was Buffalo Bill's hearty rejoinder.

"And the duel?"

"Must be fought," was the stern response.

When the crowd had gone, and even the sounds of many voices did not come back to those on the piazza of the miner's home, the prisoner was brought out of the cabin, where he had heard all that had taken place, and was led back by the two soldiers to the camp, Buffalo Bill telling one of the troopers to say to the sergeant that he would come after a while and remain all night, in case a few hot-heads might get under the influence of liquor and return to make trouble.

Before he departed, the prisoner thanked Lou and Bill for the stand they had taken to defend him, and he yet showed how frightened he had been by the narrow escape from being hanged by the mob. When he had gone, Miner Turner led the way into supper. It was found that the negro cook had also been terribly frightened.

The cook was in an agony of fear, and said:

"I tell yer, we is all jist as good as hanged, for I knows it!"

But her fears were laughed down by Margaret and Lou, and she served supper in a short time, the

scout alone, however, not seeming to have lost his appetite.

After half-an-hour spent upon the piazza, Buffalo Bill took his leave, and wended his way to camp.

Except that his wounds were sore, and he had not yet regained his former strength, he felt no great inconvenience from them. In a few days he would be all right and ready for his duel with Dick Dashiell.

Upon that subject the two girls had a long talk after the departure of Buffalo Bill, and the miner had gone to his cot, for he retired early.

"Lou, I have an idea that I hope we can carry out," said Margaret, when they were alone upon the piazza.

"I'll do all in my power, Margaret."

"You are a brave and noble girl, and but for your pluck to-day a terrible scene of carnage would have taken place.

"You deserve a medal from Congress, really."

"Nonsense, the men are not as bad as people believe; there is an element of good among them which will assert itself when it is needed and their honor appealed to. I know this, for I have seen some wild scenes in these mountains, Margaret, and this is not the first tumult my influence has quelled, for I appeal to their better natures.

"When Black Jack, the desperado, who afterward, you know, turned out to be my father's brother, and who kidnaped me, held sway in Mountain City, he ruled all with a rod of iron, and his name was a terror.

"Several times he incited trouble, now I know, to have my father killed, and the men obeyed my bidding, the bidding of a little girl, and ceased their mob madness.

"No, no, I do not fear them, wild as they seem, and you saw how Buffalo Bill faced them. They admire pluck above all things, and Dick Dashiell trusted himself right in their midst, after their threats a few moments before to hang him."

"Yes, they are a strange combination; but, though I have seen strange sights in my border experience, I never beheld such a scene as that one this evening."

"And may you never again."

"Amen, say I, with all fervency. But now of my idea."

"Out with it."

"It is of Dick Dashiell I would speak."

"Yes."



"I like that man, and I cannot but believe that there is more good in him than he is given credit for."

"I know it."

"Now, certain notions of border honor demand that he and Buffalo Bill must fight a duel."

"And they will."

"Oh, yes, Bill is set upon it, and wild horses could not tear him from a purpose he was set on accomplishing, where he deemed his honor and duty at stake."

"Yes, they will fight."

"And the death of one, or both, will follow."

"Surely."

"This must not be."

"It cannot be helped, Margaret."

"I am not so sure of that."

"I am."

"The government cannot afford to lose Buffalo Bill, outside of all our personal considerations, and I fear that Dick Dashiell is as dead a shot and as dangerous a man in a duel as the scout is."

"That is my opinion."

"Now, my idea is to go and see Dick Dashiell."

"See him?"

"Yes, you and I."

"Oh, Margaret!"

"You pointed out his cabin to me, and it stands alone, and no one would see us go there."

"He sleeps until noon, you say, so we will take a hunt in the mountains, come back by his cabin about noon, and see him."

"What for?"

"Well, he owes his life to-night to Buffalo Bill, and we must ask him to so look upon it, and refuse to fight the scout."

"He would not dare to do it."

"He must."

"They would say he was a coward."

"From all accounts, that accusation would not be borne out by the facts, for he has a record to give it the lie, while he might very quickly, and doubtless would, put to sleep any such charges against him."

"He could say frankly that Buffalo Bill, having befriended him in the hour of his greatest need, he withdrew his challenge and refused to fight him, for you know your father said it was the crowd in the Gold Brick that night that demanded that he pit him-

self against the scout in a duel, after the choicest desperado in the valley had been killed by Buffalo Bill."

"Yes, and I am with you heartily, Margaret, and we will go to-morrow, for delays are dangerous," and, feeling that they were going to do a good work, the two fair plotters retired to their rooms and were soon sound asleep.

## CHAPTER VII.

### "TAKE NOTICE."

Miner Turner, Buffalo Bill and the two girls met at breakfast the next morning.

The valley looked beautiful in the early morning, the miners had all gone to their work, and the silence was broken only by the singing of the birds that always love to hover about human habitations.

Miner Turner mounted his horse and rode away to his work of the day, and Buffalo Bill returned to the camp, as he said that there was much to be looked after.

He reported the two more seriously wounded men as doing well, while Carrolton and the sergeant appeared to take no notice of their wounds.

As for himself, he said that the miner doctor had reported him as in fine condition.

Then the scout returned to the military camp, while Lou and Margaret, mounting their horses, and with their rifles swung at their backs, rode away to hunt for game.

They found the camps deserted, the miners being away working their claims, and yet where they met miners they were most politely saluted.

The dwellers in Miners' Mountain took great pride in having these two beautiful, brave girls dwelling in their midst.

Mountain City was almost deserted, but those they saw there gave them a welcome as they dashed through the little village of small cabins and large saloons.

Down the valley swept the fair hunters. After leaving all the camps behind them, they went at a slower pace, and began to look for game.

It was not long before an antelope was brought down by Margaret, and soon after Lou got a couple of wild turkeys, and they were content.

Skilled huntresses, both of them, they knew how to run a knife across the throat of an antelope, and to place it upon the back of a horse. This done, and



with the turkeys dangling on either side of Lou's pony, and Margaret's game behind her saddle, they started back toward home, for it will be remembered that they had an important mission to perform.

It was just noon by Lou's watch when they turned into the little glen at the head of which the cabin of the desperado duelist was situated.

It was located beneath a group of pines, on the point of a ledge of rocks, overhung by a lofty cliff behind, and on either side, which completely sheltered it.

The advance up the glen a man standing against the door of the cabin could defend against a score.

A spring was at one side of the cabin, a rustic arbor, with table and settee, and a shed for a couple of horses in the rear.

The cabin was stoutly built, with one large front room across its length, and two smaller ones in the rear, one used as a sleeping-room, the other as a kitchen, and the larger as a sitting-room, and the latter was carpeted with the skins of bear, fox, wolves, mountain lion and sheep, the walls hung with pencil sketches of scenes in the valley, trophies and curios of all kinds, in which there was a perfect arsenal of weapons.

As the two girls rode up to the cabin, they saw that the door was ajar, and upon it was a piece of white paper posted.

"He must be at home, for his door is open," said Margaret.

"What does that placard mean there?" Lou asked.

Riding up to the door, she called out:

"Ho, Dick Dashiell, are you there?"

There was no answer, and Lou called again.

Still no reply.

They rode up close to the door, and Lou read aloud what was written on the piece of paper.

It was a sheet of letter paper pasted firmly upon the door, and read as follows:

#### TAKE NOTICE!!

TO ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.

I, Dick Dashiell, known as the Desperado Duelist of Miner's Mountain Camps, do hereby take leave of my house and the miners of Mountain City forever.

My purpose in thus leaving is to avoid a duel with Buffalo Bill, the government scout, whom I had challenged to meet me in a personal encounter at the Gold Brick, ten days after his duel with Red Hugh, whom he killed.

This night Buffalo Bill dared face half the miners in this valley to protect my life, and but for his brave act I would now be hanging from the end of a rope.

Therefore I refuse to meet him as agreed, and as the term of coward would be thrown in my face by many, I take my leave of my house, that I may not be forced to kill more men than those already slain by me, and whom I had more of a purpose in slaying than appeared on the surface, for I have been on a trail of revenge.

As I have publicly asserted that the man who conquered me was my heir, I now leave my cabin and all my possessions to

WILLIAM CODY—BUFFALO BILL,

*The Government Scout,*

to have and to hold as his own property, and I appoint as executor

MINER HUGH TURNER,

to see that my wishes are carried out in full.

DICK DASHIELL,

*The Gambler and Desperado Duelist.*

When she had read the placard over plainly and distinctly, Lou turned and gazed at Margaret.

Both were greatly amazed, and certainly well pleased, for they revealed it by their faces.

"Well, Lou, what do you think of that?"

"We have been anticipated."

"Yes, he has proven himself a brave man, with a good heart after all."

"He certainly has; but now to take the news to father and Buffalo Bill, for they will be at the cabin for dinner by the time we get there," and they started off at a canter for home.

Buffalo Bill's face, usually so calm, revealed his surprise in every feature when he learned from the girls that Dick Dashiell had gone, and left him as his heir.

The placard had been left on the door. As soon as dinner was over it was decided that the four should return to the cabin, along with several others, whom Miner Turner would pick up in Mountain City.

"I cannot understand it," said Buffalo Bill, repeating the remark several times.

"You do not attribute it to cowardice, do you?" asked Margaret.

"Cowardice, Miss Margaret? Why, that man has not an atom of it in his makeup.

"I do not believe he ever knew what it was to feel a pang of fear.

"No, no, he went, as he said, to avoid a difficulty with one who he felt served him last night. I like the man, and did when I first saw him, and, let me tell you now, what I have kept a secret before, that when Red Hugh told him to give the word to fire in



such a way that it would be an advantage to him, he refused, and, more, whispered to me as he passed:

"Look out for a shot before the word."

"That put me on my guard, and perhaps saved me my life."

"That proves him to be at heart a good man and possessed of honor," said Miner Turner.

"And he intimates on the placard that he was on the track of revenge here," said Margaret.

"Yes; have you noticed any reason for so believing, Miner Turner?" said Buffalo Bill.

"Now it comes up, it occurs to me that his duels have been fought with striking regularity, and in each case with a man whom he has often played cards with, and almost invariably accused of cheating."

"Then he has been picking out his men."

"It would seem so, Bill."

"I never heard that he was accused of cheating at cards, father."

"Accused, yes, but it was never proven on him, and the accuser answered the accusation with his life. Yes, I guess that, after all the half-dozen years he has passed here, he has been on a trail of revenge, now that I review the facts," said the miner.

"He is a very young man, sir, scarcely over twenty-eight or thirty."

"Yes, thirty is his age, for he once told me so, Miss Margaret, but when his mustache is shaved off, for sometimes he does cut it off, he looks much younger than that. With his long hair, his face is almost womanly then."

"He certainly is a most mysterious and remarkable man; but now let us be off for his cabin, ere some straggler gets in there and robs it or tears the placard down."

In ten minutes they had mounted their horses and were riding in the direction of the duelist's cabin.

On their way through Mountain City, Miner Turner halted and asked several of the most prominent miners to accompany them, and when they halted before the door of Dick Dashiell's deserted home there were nine in the party.

The door still stood ajar, as it had been left, the placard was there, and no one else had visited the cabin since the girls had left it.

On the way Miner Turner had explained to those who had joined him, that the young ladies had gone there to try to prevent the gambler from fighting

the duel with Buffalo Bill, and, reading the placard, had hastened home and informed him of the discovery.

"Dick Dashiell came to my store last night, when he came back with the crowd, and settled his account in full," said the storekeeper, "for he was always a square man," said the keeper of the Mountain City store.

"Yes, and he settled his accounts in full at the tavern, treated the whole crowd to drinks and cigars and gave a few hundreds to Samaritan Sam to look out for the poor men and the sick ones in the valley," said the landlord of the tavern.

"I remember, too, he bought quite a bill of goods last night, and a packsaddle," said the storekeeper "and helped Cripple Jack."

"Yes, and led away the horses I have been keeping at the coach stables for him, and he owns five of the finest animals I ever laid eyes on," said the landlord, who was also tavern-keeper, stagecoach agent and postmaster as well.

"Well, he has surely gone," remarked Miner Turner, as he read the placard.

"He has indeed gone, and you are his heir, Buffalo Bill," said the landlord.

"There is no doubt of that fact," remarked the storekeeper, "for his will says so, and I recognize and will swear to it, that it is the handwriting and signature of Dick Dashiell."

"What he says goes," remarked the others, while Buffalo Bill seemed embarrassed at the situation he found himself in as the heir of the desperate duelist.

"Yes, and as the executor named, I will see that his wishes are carried out."

"Now, let us see just what the cabin contains," and they all dismounted at the suggestion of Miner Turner, and entered the home of the border duelist.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### BUFFALO BILL'S VISITOR.

"Here are three horses, showing that he took two with him," called out one of the men from the stable in the rear, and he led the animals around in front of the cabin.

They were three beautiful horses, and selecting the larger one, Buffalo Bill said:

"I shall prize this animal as having belonged to my foe-friend, Dick Dashiell."



"The other two, Miss Margaret, you and Miss Lou are to have."

In vain were the protestations, for the scout was firm, and both the girls yielded, delighted with their beautiful presents, which had the record of having belonged to Dick Dashiel.

Entering the cabin, where not a soul in the valley had ever been known to have been invited, all were struck with the air of refinement therein.

There was a table in the center, covered with a patchwork of the skins of wild animals, fringed with birds' feathers.

A student's lamp was on the table, and writing materials, the inkstand being a curled horn of the mountain sheep, set in a rock filled with gold grains.

There was a shelf of books on one side, a guitar and a flute, weapons of various kinds, Indian curios, skins, and a lot of other things prized most highly by bordermen.

A box, upon being opened, revealed quite a treasure in bits of gold, several thousand dollars worth, with a bag which had a tag on it that read:

"Taken from the body of Red Hugh, and left me by him."

In one of the rear rooms was a rustic cot made of cedar, with sheets and blankets, and on the wall a lot of clothes too bulky to be carried with him.

There were pen and pencil sketches, artistic in execution, upon the walls also, as in the larger room, bearing the letters "D. D."

The third room was a kitchen with cooking utensils, but as the gambler duelist took his meals at the tavern, the place was used more as a lumber room.

"Well, Bill, here is your property, and this map on the wall shows your claim as staked out, and there was a find here once, but never worked," said Miner Turner.

"No, it was of too little value," remarked the storekeeper.

"Well, Mr. Turner, as the heir, and you being the executor, please sit down and write that I leave the claim, the cabin, and all it contains, excepting the inkstand and a few minor things, with the gold in the box, left by Red Hugh, all else, to the care of three citizens in Mountain City, to be disposed of for the benefit of the sick and needy who are now in the valley, and Cripple Jack.

The horses are already disposed of, and I believe

the young ladies wish the sketches, while the inkstand I intend as a present to Colonel Loomis."

There was surprise at this decision of the scout's to give his inheritance away, but he meant what he said, and he was honored the more for it, for there were sick and needy in the camps to whom the gift would come as a boon.

Miner Turner, therefore, drew up the paper, and in it the storekeeper, blacksmith and landlord of the Exchange were named as the men to dispose of the claim, and distribute the results of the sale where it would do the most good.

The documents were duly signed by Bill as heir, and Miner Turner as executor, while the witnesses were Margaret, Lou and the others present.

The things received were then packed upon one of the horses, and the valuables turned over to the storekeeper as treasurer, after which the door was locked and the party started upon their return.

The news went like wildfire through Mountain City that Dick Dashiel had gone away, and at first the rumors were that he had been driven off by Buffalo Bill, and again that he had fled from cowardice.

The rumor was contradicted, yet many asserted their belief in it until, learning from Carrollton how the talk went up in Mountain City.

Buffalo Bill wended his way to the Gold Brick that night after he left the miner's cabin.

His entrance of the large saloon was the signal for a hush to fall upon all, and then followed a loud cheer of greeting.

The scout had not yet gotten his color back. His face was pale, but calm, and, walking to a position near the bar, he faced the crowd as though he had something to say.

"Pards, you have all heard the truth of Dick Dashiels leaving this valley, and in spite of it, and knowing that he left because he did not wish to fire upon one who had befriended him, there are some, I have heard, who persist in calling him a coward, now that he is not here to silence your tongues.

"To those let me say, that I consider him as brave a man as I ever met, and the one whom I hear apply the epithet of coward to him, I shall hold responsible, the same as if it was hurled in my own teeth.

"There has been bloodshed enough in this valley, so, pards, I hope there will be no one to urge on more trouble."

A cheer greeted the manly words of the scout, and



those present who had been loud-mouthed in denouncing the scout, now hung their heads in silence, not daring to take up the gauntlet so daringly thrown down to them.

"Now, pards, as I must soon leave your beautiful valley, let me ask you all to join me in a parting glass," and the crowd accepted the invitation as one man, and Buffalo Bill's health was drank with a will. His generous donation to the sick and needy in the valley was appreciated by all but a few soreheads, but they wisely refrained from voicing their opinions, which were formed on the basis of prejudice against any man who was deservedly made a hero of.

It was the third day after the departure of Dick Dashiel that Buffalo Bill was seated in camp, when a trooper came up with a visitor who wished to see him.

The man was an odd-looking specimen of humanity, in appearance not unlike the pictures one sees of Santa Claus.

He had a full beard that reached to his belt, and would have been white only that it wore a yellowish hue that soap and hot water might have caused to depart from it.

His hair was long, iron gray, and thick, and his statue tall and powerful.

From head to foot he was clad in buckskin, Indian tanned. He wore moccasins, leggins, a hunting shirt and cap, the latter having a fox's tail hanging from it down his back.

He had a belt of arms, two revolvers and a knife, a breech-loading army rifle, a bow and quiver of arrows.

At his back was a buckskin knapsack, home-made, with a blanket rolled up tightly on the top, another at the bottom, and a canvas hammock and large rubber blankets strapped between.

To the knapsack hung a coffeepot, a tin cup, frying pan, and canteen.

In spite of his apparent age, he stood as upright as a soldier, and seemed not to mind the weight he carried.

He gazed at Bill in a curious way, like one who was glad to meet him, and said with a pronounced border dialect:

"So you be Buffalo Bill, hey?"

"Yes, pard, so they call me."

"You look it, for you hain't no ordinary man."

"Thanks, pard, sit down."

"I'm goin' ter."

"Yes, I've heerd of yer agin and agin, and the Injuns say yes is jist pizen ter them, bad medicine, while road-agents and sich hain't happy when you is around."

"I'm right down glad ter meet yer, Buffalo Bill, put it thar," and he held out his hand, which the scout grasped, while he answered:

"The pleasure is mutual, pard, but I have not yet gotten hold of your name."

"That's so."

"Forgot ter interdooce myself, but it's never too late ter do good."

"I hain't ashamed o' my name, as many men around here is, and fer reasons."

"It may be Sandy Craft, or rightly, Sanderson Craft, called Sandy for short, and forty year ago hailin' from ther mountains of North Car'liny, now a citizen o' ther Wild West. Ther Injuns call me ther Grizzly Bear Chief, Wolf Man, and sich, while ther few palefaces as knows me calls me ther Hermit Trapper, seein' as I traps for a livin'."

"Though I hain't ther friend o' ther Injuns, they don't hunt me, for reasons that ther chiefs and me is pards from 'wayback."

"I has a little shanty up in ther mountains, and thar I lives and hunts pelts, comin' twict a year ter tradin' p'int's ter sell them, and buy grub, sometimes one place, sometimes another."

"I comed here to-day with a couple o' horses loaded with pelts, and I has bought a lot o' grub ter tote back."

"I come ter this sunset country long ago, 'cause I didn't want ter be crowded with com'pany, and I likes it."

"Now yer has my history so as yes could write my obituary if I dropped dead."

"I heered ther gold diggers talkin' o' yer, and as I were told yer was here, I come ter see yer, and I'm proud ter meet yer, Bill."

The words and manner of the old trapper amused Buffalo Bill.

He saw that he was a character in his way, and set him down as an honest man.

He had often heard that there was an old trapper in the mountains who was now and then seen by scouts, and who was called the Hermit Hunter, but he had never before met him.

Never had he heard anything against him, though it was wondered how he dared to trap in the Indian country as he did.

It was said that he had a lone camp, and the redskins had stated that he had as pets grizzly bears, mountain lions, wolves, wildcats and snakes, with an eagle, raven, and owls.

This alone made him dreaded by the Indians, who regarded him as possessed of supernatural powers.

The scout was glad, therefore, to meet the strange man, and he said:

"Well, pard, I am really glad to meet you, and if you go my way on the trail back, I shall be glad of your company, for I leave here in a few days now."

"No, thankee, I pulls out to-day, but I wants a leetle talk with yer first."

"Fire away, old man."



"Yes, sir, if I does live kinder friendly with ther Injuns, I hain't ter be regarded as no renegade ter my own people."

"I should hope not."

"No, I hain't that kind o' a devil, only I left home long ago a poor man."

"Fact was, I got eddicated, though yer wouldn't hink it now, and I expected ter marry a girl I loved more than my soul. But while I were away a-soldierin' in Mexico, for I were a capt'in under General Taylor, a man I thought my friend, who slept under the same blanket with me, and whom I risked my life ter take off ther field when he were wounded, went back home, and lied about me."

"He told how I had secretly married a Mexican gal, and that pretty nigh broke my leetle one's heart."

"She was urged by her parents not to think of me no more, for I was poor, there being a big mortgage on my mother's home, and he bein' rich, my false friend, she were forced ter marry him. I come back after the war were over ter find my mother dead."

He paused a moment, and then, dropping the border dialect, and speaking with deep emotion, he continued:

"I was told that news had come that I had married a Mexican girl and had been killed soon after."

"It broke my mother's heart, and she died some months before my return."

"Nor was this all, for I found my false friend the husband of the girl who had been my idol, and more, he had made her his slave, most cruelly treating her. I could not stand that, so I made him meet me in a duel. We fought with swords, and I ran him through the heart. Leaving my mortgaged home in the hands of an attorney, I left there and became a wanderer, at last to seek an abiding place here. My pelts have brought money enough in three years to pay off that mortgage; the town had built out to my home, and to-day I am a rich man, and yet I linger here, as you see."

"Pard, there is that in your face that has made me tell the story I have breathed to no one else—forgive me," and the man's face once more assumed its serenity, broken by the recital of his wronged life.

Buffalo Bill had become much impressed with his visitor.

Now, that he looked at him, he saw that he was not as old as he had at first appeared, and he felt that sorrow and bitterness had turned him prematurely gray, though he yet must be on in years.

He certainly was no ordinary man, and yet he had been content to lead the life of a hermit for long years, for he must have been little more than of age when he came out upon the plains.

A rich man, by his own confession, he yet remained in the wild West, living a lone and dangerous life, with all its hardships and suffering.

The more he saw of him, the more he admired him, and when he had heard his strange, romantic story of wrong, Buffalo Bill held out his hand and said warmly:

"I am glad to claim you for a pard, Mr. Craft, and I feel that we will be good friends."

"Don't see why not, for we is both honest men in our way," was the answer, and he dropped back into his border way of speaking.

"Yer see, I've got something more to tell yer, and it's not about myself."

"Well, I shall be glad to hear it if it is about yourself, pard."

"I said I was friendly with ther Injuns?"

"Yes."

"Yer see, I once come across two Injun chiefs fightin' in ther timber."

"One were a Pawnee, t'other were a young Sioux."

"Ther latter were wounded, but were givin' ther other a tough fight o' it, though he was bleedin' free."

"Well, says I ter myself, that hain't jist square, so I'll take up for ther under dog in ther fight."

"I c'u'd have kilt them both, fer they was too tuck up with their own work ter see me, so I concluded that, as ther leetle feller was gettin' worsted, wounded too, I'd chip in and help him out."

"I jist stepped up then, quick, and gave the big Pawnee chief a tumble, and it seems I were a leetle too rough, fer he fell so hard he hit his head agin a rock and lay thar."

"T'other was about used up, and yet showed fight, fer he supposed his turn would come next, but I told him I wasn't goin' ter hurt him, and so stopped the bleedin' from ther arrow wound in his side, and fixed it up for him."

"Well, he was that grateful, derned if I didn't see tears in his eyes, and Injuns ain't given to ther cry-baby act ter no alarmin' extent, as far as I has been a judge o' ther varmint. They is humans like us, and their larnin' is ter kill them as persecutes them, and they does it, and ther palefaces hain't been their bosom friends."

"Well, arter I had camped there and made my Sioux chief comfortable, I takes a look at the Pawnee."

"Then I sees that he was dead, and ther rock had caved in his knowledge-box. I jist yanked off his scalp and gave it to ther young chief with my compliments, and he was pleased all over. I give him also ther weapins o' his foe, and over in ther timber was his pony, as fine a spotted beast as I ever saw, and I let ther Sioux have him also. Seein' that ther chief was a leetle more hurt than I thought, I helped him on his pony, which was also near, and, havin' buried ther Pawnee, took him ter my camp."

"I happens ter have an idea fer pets, and bein' as I has caught, when babies, a couple o' grizzly bears,



ditto wolves, ditto mountain lions, and wildcats, with an eagle or two, hawk and owls, my layout looks like a menagerie, and Injuns don't hanker arter bein' round thar.

"Ther Sioux kinder thought that I was a evil spirit or bad medicine, and he were scared about inter fits.

"But I treated him prime for several days, and then tuk him ter his village, and you bet that made thar whole outfit my friends.

"It give me ther right ter go unmolested, and now and then I'd get a visit from ther chief, for he is ther high mucky-muck o' ther village now, and calls me brother, which I suppose I is, seein' how Adam was granddad o' us all.

"Wal, I got inter ther village once in a great while, and I jist wants ter tell yer what I discovered thar when I went a month ago, and it's been a-frettin' me a heap."

"What is it, pard?"

"It were that they has a white captive there."

"Indeed!"

"They has."

"When was this?"

"Some months or more ago."

"Then it was not the one that I at first thought."

"Do you know of any captives the Indians have?"

"Yes."

"Do you know that the tribe has a renegade white chief?"

"No, for Red Heart, ther Injun who is my friend, is chief."

"You refer to that tribe of Sioux that lie north of Fort Blank?"

"Yes."

"What white captives do you know that they have with them?"

"Only one, a young girl."

"A young girl?" asked Buffalo Bill, in surprise.

"Yes, and one that made my heart weep to see, for she is young and beautiful.

"I only saw her for a minute, and Red Heart, the chief, told me it was his daughter, but he lies.

"That is my secret, pard, and I wants yer ter rescue that poor leetle gal."

"I am with you, old man," was the scout's determined response.

## CHAPTER IX.

### BUFFALO BILL'S LONE TRAIL.

For a long time Buffalo Bill talked with the old trapper, and when at last the latter took his leave, they appeared to have become the best of friends.

The trapper went away with a substantial present from the scout in the shape of a repeating rifle, and a pair of the latest patented revolvers, with ample ammunition for them—weapons which he had taken from the cabin of Dick Dashiell.

An hour after the scout saw him ride along the trail, going north toward Zigzag Cañon, mounted on a handy little pony, and with another one trailing behind, loaded down with a pack saddle.

What surprised Bill most was the fact that a huge gray wolf trotted behind the pack horse, while a large panther led the way along the trail, a few paces in front of the trappers' horse.

Seated upon the back of the pack horse and apparently enjoying his ride, was a raven. The strange sight caused the soldiers to stand and gaze in wonder at the odd company of the man.

Seeing Bill, he held up his rifle and patted it affectionately, while he called out:

"I've got it, and I'm proud to own it.

"See you again, Pard Bill, sometime—maybe."

With this he passed out of sight along the trail while Bill walked up to Miner Turner's cabin.

Lou and Margaret were seated in their favorite spot, the piazza, and they greeted him pleasantly.

"Did you see it?" they asked in a breath.

"The procession?"

"Yes, man, horse, wolf, panther, crow—oh! what a sight it was, and Lou tells me she has seen the outfit before."

"Yes, indeed, several times.

"Once he came down here, I remember, with a grizzly bear and a wild cat as rear guard, and a tremendous rattlesnake coiled up on top of the pack.

"He stampeded the whole of Mountain City, and McCord, the storekeeper, told him to help himself to all he saw, and never mind paying for it.

"He camped in what the miners delight in calling the Boulevard, and not a man was seen in Mountain City's streets that night. When he got his provisions and left the next morning, the sigh of relief that came down the valley sounded like a storm rising. He has been here often since, I am told, so the miners all know him now, though they do not get intimate with him or his pets. He was over to the camp, I noticed, Buffalo Bill, so that the soldiers had a talk with him. I suppose."

Both the scout and Margaret laughed heartily at Lou's description of the old trapper's visit with his pets, and then Bill answered:

"Yes, I had a long talk with him, and I assure you I like him immensely. He is a man whose life has known sorrows, and he has hidden here from his fellow men, in these wilds.

"What I tell you is in confidence, of course. But that which he told me this morning will cause me to start on the back trail to-morrow."

"So soon?"

"Yes."

"Nothing of a serious nature to cause it, I hope?"

"I'll tell you just what it is, though, of course, you must keep the secret."



Both gave their pledge to do so, and Bill went on: "The old man is no renegade, but has the run of the Indian country unmolested.

"He can even visit the Indian villages, and a month ago, when there at the village of Red Heart, the head chief of the band, the old man saw a captive, a young and beautiful girl, he says, whom Red Heart claims as his daughter."

"Ah!" "But the trapper asserts that she is a blonde, and has not a drop of Indian blood in her veins."

"Has she been there long?" "No, he thinks not over a year."

"Can she not be rescued?" "That is just why I start on the trail to-morrow, for the sergeant can follow by slow marches, several days after."

"Do you go alone?" "Yes, I shall go up into the Indian country, meet the old trapper, and endeavor to rescue the girl captive."

"Buffalo Bill, you trust too much in your lucky star," said Margaret, shaking her head ominously.

That night many efforts were made to have Bill give up his intended trip into the Indian country, to attempt, alone, the rescue of the white captive there, but in vain.

He would stick to his resolve against all that Miner Turner and the two girls could say.

"You see, I do not go alone," he argued. "I will meet the old trapper."

"And you have only his word for it that he is honest, and he may himself be the renegade white chief," said Lou.

"No, Miss Lou, I have studied too many faces to be far wrong in noting his, and I'll vouch for it that he is all that he says he is."

"And yet you risk your life, torture and all, for the sake of an unknown white captive?"

"If I can, with the aid of the old trapper, rescue the young girl."

"I hope that you may, Buffalo Bill, but, as I said, you depend too much on your phenomenal luck to get you out of deadly scrapes," Margaret remarked.

"The scout laughed, and the miner said:

"So you start to-morrow?" "Yes, sir."

"Are you well enough?" "I am perfectly well, sir, for my wounds give me not the slightest trouble now."

"Where do you go?" "To a rendezvous appointed with the trapper."

"And then?" "To the Indian village of Red Heart, I suppose."

"The sergeant goes when?" "He will start in four days, for the wounded men

can travel by that time without injury, and they can make slow marches."

"The sergeant is to wait at the place he is to meet you how long?"

"Until the third day."

"Well, Buffalo Bill, I have been thus particular for a reason."

"Yes, sir?"

"I find that I can get away from here within a week, or ten days at the furthest, for McCord, the storekeeper, and the others who have the Dick Dashiell fund in hand, will complete the business I have to leave unfinished.

"Now, I am anxious to get these young ladies to the shelter of the fort once more, and soon after start East, so I am glad to hear that I will be able to shorten my stay here in the mines by a couple of months."

"I am certainly glad to hear this, sir."

"In going from here, as I will for good, I will have to carry along a considerable sum, in money and in uncoined gold, so I do not wish any one to know my intention, save those named, until the day of my departure, for, in spite of the grand work you have done, there are still bad men in the mines who might be tempted to kill and rob where so much money was at stake."

"You are right, sir."

"I therefore ask you if you will give the sergeant permission to remain and serve as an escort?"

"Nothing would give me more pleasure than to do so, sir, and I am glad that you can go along back with the troops."

"With the sergeant, corporal, and their men, Carrollton and myself, it gives us many fighting men."

"Yes, sir."

"Then there are the two horse wranglers and the prisoner."

"Release Jessop, sir, the moment you leave camp, for he will be as true as steel."

"They make more, and with the girls and the cook, we count up big, not an unformidable looking cavalcade by any means, and besides, we will have a score of extra and pack animals, so it would take a large force of Indians to attack us, and no road agents would consider it for a moment. The chances are that we will go through with flying colors."

"There is no doubt about it, sir, and as I said, I am glad you are going for your own sake and for the sake of the young ladies.

"Carrollton knows the trails well, and you can wait for me at the rendezvous named, for three days at least.

"If I arrive there first, I will wait for you.

"Now, sir, we understand each other, and, as I make an early start, I will say good-night."

All hated to see the scout go, but they shook hands



in farewell; and he went over to his camp, gave the sergeant instructions about waiting for Miner Turner, and before dawn, mounted upon his own horse, and with the animal of Dick Dashiell carrying his pack, was off on his lone trail.

He camped an hour at noon, and was quietly eating his dinner, when there came a sharp report, a whirring sound, and the scout fell over backward from his saddle upon which he had been seated.

As he lay motionless two men bounded over a rock a hundred yards away.

They were white men, in miners' garb, and each held a rifle in his hand as he ran.

"He's a human, after all, pard, as I knowed he were," cried one, as he came along.

"Yas, yer bullet did it, Jake, and I has another bullet fer him ef he ain't quite dead," said the other, as they were within a few feet of their victim.

"And I have a bullet for each of you."

The words came with startling distinctness, and they were followed by two shots in rapid succession.

Both men went down on their faces, and rising from the ground, Bill put his hand up, and there was a spot of blood on it.

"The bullet just nipped my ear—a close call!

"Now to get acquainted."

He walked toward the two men, and turned them over, and saw his fatal brand, a bullet hole between the eyes of each one.

"Yes, I recognize them both.

"They were pards of Red Hugh, and now they have started on his trail.

"They evidently knew in some way that I was to take the trail alone, so started out ahead of me.

"I must bury them," and with this he took his hatchet from his pack, marked out a grave, and began to dig where the earth was soft, right by the side of the trail.

He took a blanket from each, and after looking through the pockets of the dead men, with little results as to finding anything of value, he rolled them up and placed them in the grave.

The two horses he had thus fallen heir to were really good animals, as were also their trappings, while the rifle and other weapons of the men were of the best.

An hour before sunset, having left the trail at noon, he came to a halt in a wild spot, a stream flowing through a beautiful glen, with lofty cliffs sheltering it.

"Yes, this is the spot, but I do not see any signs of the trapper yet," muttered Bill.

But he had hardly uttered the words, when he saw a horseman coming up the glen.

"It is the trapper, and he is prompt," said the scout, and he rode toward him.

The hunter greeted him with a shout of welcome, and as he drew near, called out:

"I seen so many hoses I jist laid low until I seed there was only one man with 'em.

"They is good critters, all of 'em; but I is glad ter see yer, pard."

"And I to meet you, Pard Sandy."

Buffalo Bill followed along after the hunter hermit in silence, for the trail was not an easy one, and neither spoke for a long while.

A ride of a dozen miles took them further into the mountains, and at last the trail led up a cañon with high cliffs on either side, which even a wildcat could not scale.

At the further end of the cañon was a log hut, stoutly built, and as strong as a stockade fort.

Riding up to the cabin, the hunter said:

"This is my home, Bill, and you are welcome—see, my pets wish to get acquainted with you."

He had dropped his border way of speaking, and addressed the scout in a courtly, hospitable way.

But it was the "pets that wanted to get acquainted with him" that most impressed the scout.

They were not the kind of pets that he just longed for, but he was anxious to appear friendly if they were.

There were two large grizzly bears, several mountain lions, a couple of wildcats, half-a-dozen wolves, a large rattlesnake lying beneath the door, and ravens, owls and eagles.

Bill's iron nerve gave several twitches as he gazed at the pets, and he said:

"Pard Sandy, do you enjoy such company to any great extent?"

"Well, yes."

"Those grizzlies, and, in fact, all my pets, never knew what it was to be wild, nor did the generations before them for several removes back.

"I do not allow them to increase on me, but keep them in limited numbers, and always let them know that I am master.

"I began with them in the first place as cubs and young birds, and made them look to me for food, and you would be surprised to know that not one of them would go beyond the bars of the cañon without me."

"And they do not eat your horses up?"

"Not they, for, see, they have not dared touch that game that I hung there before going away.

"No, I could bring a lamb in the cañon, and they would not disturb it.

"Just see how friendly they are with you."

"Yes, I both see and feel; but that horrid snake there?"

"He is harmless, for I pulled his fangs when he was only a youngster."



"I am glad to know that, but I suppose that none of them bunk in the cabin with you?"

"Oh, no; they have their quarters in the rear, in bad or cold weather.

"When I go away I kill game for them and leave it around, and it lasts them for the four days I am generally gone after supplies, for at other times I am never away for longer than a day and a night, perhaps."

"But you cannot live this way much longer."

"My dear friend, I do not expect to do so.

"Of late there has been creeping over me a feeling that I must go back to the old home, to visit the scenes of my happy boyhood, to stand once more by the graves of my kindred, my loved mother and father.

"I believe I can go back and pass my days quietly, and in the end be laid to rest by the side of those of my blood, while I can with my money do much good in the world.

"Yes, pard, I long to go, and I tell you now we must rescue that young girl."

"I am with you heart and hand, Pard Sandy, so say the word when we go?"

"To-morrow we will start, for we can talk it all over to-night."

"How far is the village from here?"

"About twenty-five miles, and I know the trail well."

"What does it number?"

"Say two thousand for Red Heart's village, with more in the other camps; but those we will have nothing to do with, and they are miles to the north of us."

The animals sat about, looking on, patiently awaiting the bones and scraps that would come to them, while the owl, night having come on, set up his doleful hoot at intervals of every ten minutes, as though he were set there especially to mark off the passage of time.

"That infernal bird will give me indigestion, and the nightmare will follow. I never heard such a melancholy hoot," said Buffalo Bill, laughing.

"Shut up, Night Eyes," cried the hermit, and the owl at once subsided, the raven giving a croak of satisfaction.

Anxious to curry favor with the beasts, Bill gave them a bone and pieces of meat, which they appeared to appreciate greatly from his hands.

"I am not a toady, pard, but in this case I make an exception, for I do wish to stand well with your family," said the scout.

Supper being over and the animals fed, the two men lighted their pipes and sat down for a long chat together.

\* \* \* \* \*

The camp of the Sioux was reached, and, as the

pard of the old trapper, Red Heart made the scout welcome among his people, for none knew him as the great Indian fighter, Buffalo Bill.

To the great surprise of Buffalo Bill, there were two captives in camp, a man and a woman, and the hermit trapper arranged with Red Heart, in payment of certain stores, ammunition, weapons and blankets, to give up the two prisoners, the young girl having been sold to the chief by renegade whites, who had captured a wagon train, some years before, killing the people, save the girl and a young man, who escaped.

What was the amazement of Buffalo Bill to find in the man, captured a few days before while asleep, none other than Dick Dashiell.

"And here, a captive, I found my sister, Dora, whom I believed dead, murdered with my parents, and upon whose murderers I have had my revenge in the men I have killed, one by one at Miner's Mountain, for I discovered them, the guilty ones, as I could. Now, you are the one to rescue my sister and myself, Buffalo Bill," said Dick Dashiell, warmly.

A place was appointed for Buffalo Bill to return with the price of ransom, the hermit trapper to remain with Red Heart until he did so, and then the scout took his leave, with the captives. The three were awaiting the coming of the soldiers and Miner Turner and the girls when they came along.

It was a very happy meeting, and all went to the fort together; but Buffalo Bill lost no time in returning with the ransom supplies, and Dick Dashiell went with him.

There were Red Heart and Old Sandy, the goods on the pack horses were delivered, and, having left his pets to run wild, the hermit trapper returned with Buffalo Bill and Dick Dashiell to the fort, where a great ovation awaited them.

Soon after the old hermit, Miner Turner, Lou, Margaret and Dick Dashiell and his sister took a stagecoach to the East, there to make their home, Buffalo Bill acting as escort beyond the danger line, and upon his return, Colonel Loomis said:

"Cody, you have done far more good than I expected, and you deserve all praise.

"At your request I have pardoned James Jessop, the deserter, and he will prove a good soldier.

"Yes, Cody, you deserve all credit for a grand work, nobly done at the risk of almost certain death to yourself."

THE END.

Look out for next week's issue, No. 44, boys. It will contain "Buffalo Bill's Red Allies; or, Hand to Hand With the Devil Gang."

Buffalo Bill himself admits that the experience this story relates was the most remarkable of his wild life.





# THRILLING ADVENTURE



"Go 'way back and sit down." That's what this contest will say to all other contests if it keeps on the way it started. It's a corker, boys. There is a big snowdrift of letters here already. Keep it up. Everybody has a chance. Remember, it's the boy who tries that wins. If you failed in the last contest, don't let that discourage you. The neater and more legible your stories are the better chance they have of winning. Now, get off your coats, roll up your sleeves, and pitch in, but first read this bunch of good stories.

## A Runaway Team on a Railroad Track.

(By J. C. Mackert, Danville, Pa.)

A few years ago, on a fine June day, father and I went out in the country, about two miles from Sunbury to our ice house to get a load of ice. We returned to the butcher shop on Third street along the Pennsylvania Railroad. We unloaded the ice and were about to start.

As father picked up the line, I told him I forgot my coat. He dropped the lines again and started in after my coat. Just as he got to the door the horses took fright at something and started to run up Third street along the railroad as hard as they could go.

They went so fast that it was impossible for me to get out of the wagon. As they neared the overhead crossing at Market street they both wanted to go in opposite directions. I saw a train coming, but could do nothing. The consequence was that when the horses and wagon struck the overhead crossing the sudden stop threw the wagon box upside down right on the railroad track, and I was under it.

When it was raised up I was picked up for dead, but when I awoke a few hours later I found myself lying on a couch in my own home, with two doctors beside me.

I was sore for a couple of weeks, but soon got better. That was the fastest ride I ever had in my life. I got a good shaking up, anyway.

## The C. H. Academy Fire.

(By Nick Hiram Roberts, Mississippi.)

I am a student of C. H. Academy of Port Gibson, Miss. The buildings caught fire December 10th, and I did some very desperate work.

The buildings are four stories high, and I was on the first story when the fire alarm was given, but I managed to get to the fourth floor very quickly and found the whole floor in flames. I heard a low voice and ran to one room, and on opening the door I found one of my friends, Holt, very near dead, but quick as a flash I rescued him from death.

It was not long before one of the professors, Friarson by name, came up and was followed by a negro waiter named Simeon Boozee.

The waiter was so excited that he struck Professor Friarson on the head with a bucket of water and knocked him into the flames, but another man saved his life by dashing into the flames and carrying him down four flights of steps. He is still in a serious condition, but is expected to recover.

It was not long before the third floor was on fire, and the fourth floor fallen in and going at a very rapid rate.

Both floors fell through to the second, but we were still alive in the flames. Making a very desperate leap through the window, we all landed safe on the ground with the exception of Barney breaking his arm and Johnson his leg. Hubbard did not get hurt, and in a second was back in the burning building, attempting to rescue other friends who were in danger.

He was struck by a piece of falling timber, which knocked him forty feet below into a very deep cistern. As Barney's arm was broken, he could not do very much. He leaped into the cistern and managed to save Hubbard.

Reuben Bland, a general "flunk" around the school, was blown ninety feet into a tree top, but was still alive when found, and by means of ladders was brought to the ground in a critical condition. The buildings were completely consumed and the fun was all over.

It was a very narrow escape for all of us, but we are all well and having a fine time. We have not yet discovered how the fire started, but it is supposed to be of an incendiary origin.

## The Devil and His Angels.

(By Horace Weber, Ind.)

I will now relate a story which is true. It happened about 1847 in the northern part of Switzerland.

There was an old selfish miser, who lived in between two large hills. He had a large pear tree which produced pears from the size of a pint tin on up to a quart tin. Whenever they began to ripen he would watch day and night till they were fit to can or put in his cellar.

He had an old shotgun which he carried with him about the tree.

The boys around in the neighborhood met one night and decided on a plan which they thought might scare the old miser so that they could get the pears. They decided on this plan.

The boys who were in it divided themselves, each party going on an opposite hill from the other. One side had an old plow-wheel, which they could stuff with straw in between the spokes.

They called out, "Halloo!"

The other side said "Halloo!" and they yelled back and forth for a few minutes when one side yelled out:

"Who are you?"

The other side answered, "I am the Devil."



Then that side yelled out and said:

"Who are you?"

"We are the Devil's angels," said the other side.

The Devil said, "I want to see you. I have been looking for you for a good while. Where shall we meet?"

The other party said:

"Down under the big pear tree."

Just then the party that said they were the Devil lit the straw in the big wheel and started it down the hill toward the old man who was watching under the pear tree. The reader can imagine how the big wheel looked with fire coming from it. The flames and sparks flying from it.

I expect the old man thought that it was the devil.

He was superstitious, anyway. He dropped his gun and ran for the house as fast as he could heel it.

The boys, who were close to the tree when he got to the house heard him say:

"Gott im Himmel, es war der Teufel!"

After he had ran into the house and bolted the doors they filled their stomachs with pears, and after they had all that they could stuff they filled some sacks and took pears home with them.

The next morning the old man got up and found his pears gone, and nothing there but an old plow wheel which he had thought was a devil.

I believe my grandfather was one of the boys who did the devilment.

## My Fight With a Burglar.

(By Bert Manhart, Wyoming.)

What I am going to tell you about happened on the 1st of November, at my brother-in-law's house in Eureka, Utah, on Leadville row.

One night just after the family had gone to the theatre I heard a noise under the window of my bedroom. I got up out of bed. I went to my dresser, loaded a revolver—a forty-four—and went back to bed again.

In about half an hour I was aroused by a noise caused by cutting the screen on the window. On hearing this I stole out through a rear door, and I think I was betrayed by some slight noise. On reaching the corner I found my assailant awaiting me. I was grabbed and severely choked, but after a while I tried to jerk away so I could use the revolver. About that time I received a savage knife stab in the arm, which I think caused me to lose my senses, for I knew nothing for a while. When I came to my senses again I saw my assailant running down between the two houses. I fired one shot at him and told him to stop, but he didn't, so I fired another, but I hardly think either of them took any effect. That was my first experience in fighting burglars, and I hope it will be my last.

## Saved By a Monkey.

(By James Smith, Minn.)

One time last summer I made up my mind to run away from home.

So in company with a friend of mine, we went to the Great Northern freight yards, and caught a freight train going west.

After riding a few hours, and seeing no one, we opened the end door of the car, to see the country we were passing through.

But the conductor saw us, so he stopped the train and told us to get off.

We were very tired, so we thought we would go in the woods and take a sleep. After finding a nice place under a tree, we lay down and were soon sound asleep. About midnight I was awakened by hearing some one talking. I looked around me, but could see no one.

After listening a while, I heard the murmur of voices a short distance away.

I awoke my friend and we crawled to a place where we could hear what was being said, and overheard a plot to rob the westbound passenger train, which would pass this spot a few hours later.

We made haste to get away as quickly as possible after

hearing such important news. But I stepped on a twig, which snapped and attracted their attention.

They started in pursuit of us, and soon captured and had us bound hand and foot. They then placed us in an old log cabin, and went away.

Soon after we saw the flash of a light.

When I looked it was the most surprised and terrified moment of my life, for approaching us, was a monkey, with a large knife in his hand.

I thought my time to die had come, but after pulling our hair and teasing us a while he cut the bonds that bound us.

After that, it did not take us long to reach the next station, due East, and warn the people of the intended hold-up.

When the passengers heard the story they all thanked us and armed themselves so as to resist the attack of the robbers. After a short fight it ended in favor of the passengers.

My friend and I were well paid for our little adventure, as the conductor took up a collection from the passengers and gave it to us. We then bought a ticket and returned home.

## Cramps in Deep Water.

(By Philip Buchborn, Pa.)

I went to Atlantic City to stay for a few weeks, and while I was there I met three boys whom I know, and on one nice warm morning we proposed to go in bathing; we were all good swimmers and went out farther than anyone else. We were yelling and having a good time generally. After a while the three other boys went in, but I thought I would stay out a while longer. I stayed out about ten minutes longer and when I tried to go in I found my strength was giving out, I tried over and over again, but I couldn't make any headway, then I called for help, but the people thought I was only fooling as we were yelling before, when I was just about to give up I thought of floating. I lay on my back for some time when suddenly I felt cramps coming over me. I thought I was a goner sure, and had just started to sink when my head came in contact with something, and I caught hold, I then looked around and found that I had caught hold of Heinz's steel pier. I then called for help and a guard came and threw a rope and pulled me out. After I got on my clothes I went to the hotel and went to bed, when I got awake I had a bad cold and could not go out for a few days.

## Another Railroad Story.

(By Bertram C. Arey, Mass.)

During the summer of 1895, my cousin and I were going along the railroad after sweet grass and were talking so earnestly about what we would do when we got it that we didn't hear the steam engine which was bearing down upon us.

At last I happened to hear it and turning to my cousin showed him the iron monster behind us.

It was half way across the bridge.

We did not know what to do. We spied a hole in the bridge large enough to get through and, making a dash for it reached it in time to get down into it. I had no sooner got down than the train thundered above us. It was rather a narrow squeak for us.

And it also settled my hash for going out without some older person going with me.

## Heard the Sing of a Bullet.

(By George Abbott, Ottawa, Canada.)

One day during the autumn of last year a friend and I were out hunting for flying squirrels' nests on the shore of a small lake near here. We had found a nest in the hole of a decayed tree about six feet from the ground. As it was useless for me to reach it, being too short, my friend hoisted me up so as to place a trap cage against it. While he was lifting me up I heard a shot from the other shore of the lake and a moment after the bullet came singing over my head, cutting a small branch about four inches above my head. I plainly heard the whizz of the shot as it passed over my head, never thinking for a moment that it was the bullet from the gun I had just heard. When I came to think what a close call I had I was very much frightened, but thankful that I had escaped.



# BOYHOODS OF FAMOUS MEN.

This department contains each week the story of the early career of some celebrated American. Watch for these stories and read them, boys. They are of the most fascinating interest.

Those already published are: No. 1—Buffalo Bill; No. 2—Kit Carson; No. 3—Texas Jack; No. 4—Col. Daniel Boone; Nos. 5 and 6—David Crockett; No. 7—General Sam Houston; Nos. 8 and 9—Lewis Wetzel; Nos. 10 and 11—Capt. John Smith; No. 12—Wild Bill; No. 13—Dr. Frank Powell, the Surgeon Scout; No. 14—Buckskin Sam; No. 15—Seneca Adams ("Old Grizzly" Adams); No. 16—Pony Bob (Bob Haslam); No. 17—Major John M. Burke (Arizona Jack); No. 18—Kit Carson, Jr.; No. 19—Charles Emmett (Dashing Charlie); No. 20—Alf Slade.

## No. 21—ARIZONA CHARLIE.

(CHARLES MEADOWS.)

Charles Meadows was a California boy, and he was, as they say in Kentucky, "born to a feud."

In other words, there was a cruel vendetta between his family and other California ranchers, and the trouble was not of the Meadow's seeking.

Lives had been lost on both sides, and when but twelve years of age, riding home with an uncle one night, Charlie beheld a flash from the trail side, and Mr. Meadows fell from his saddle.

On the impulse of the moment, Charlie, armed only with a shotgun, aimed where he had seen the flash and fired.

There was a groan, and Charlie, dismounting, went to his uncle, found him alive and aided him to his saddle.

"Did you avenge me, Charlie?"

"I will see, sir," and the boy went into the thicket, his uncle's revolver in his hand.

There lay a dead body.

"Yes, sir."

"All right, mount behind me, and hold me in my saddle, for I am badly wounded."

Charlie got his uncle home. He died soon after, and two more lives were added to the vendetta death roll.

Charlie's father soon after fell another victim, and a year later the boy avenged him also, killing the man who sought to take his young life.

Then Widow Meadows, with her boy, moved from California and settled in Arizona upon a small ranch, Charlie caring for it with a couple of cowboys.

When he was sixteen, his mother died, and the boy prepared an outfit, packed it on an extra horse, took a hundred dollars in his pocket and started to roam, accompanied by a cowboy from the ranch.

They were splendidly mounted and armed, and fully able to take care of themselves.

But they were ambushed by Indians, and Cowboy Cal, Charlie's pard, was wounded; but the boy fought off the Indians and then carried his friend to a pleasant camp.

There Cowboy Cal lingered for weeks and then died.

Burying his pard, Charlie again started on an aimless trail, and one night reached Santa Fe.

Reared among the thrilling and deadly scenes told of, it was not to be wondered at that the boy in years was a man in experience.

He had grown to be a youth in size, never missed a target, could ride a wild steer, and was a very remarkable youth.

Putting up at a tavern in Santa Fe, then the roughest and toughest of rough and tough places, Charlie fixed himself up, had supper, and strolled out to see the sights.

Attracted by the music in a Mexican dance hall he went in, paying his fee at the door.

He was a fine dancer, but shy about asking any of the pretty girls to dance with him, and one recognizing this fact, invited him to be her partner.

Thus invited, Charlie responded promptly, and he won the admiration of all the señoritas, and the envy of all the men by his very elegant step and grace of manner.

Once he had broken the ice of reserve, he kept busy, but would often return and claim his first partner, until a tall, heavily-built man, dressed in miner costume, stepped up and said, angrily:

"Young fellow, you are going it a little too lively with my girl, and I want it stopped right here."

"As long as the señorita will honor me with a dance, sir, I shall not ask your consent," was the prompt reply.

In Santa Fe, at that time, a word would sometimes bring on death, and all present expected to see trouble, for the large man seemed to be well known.

Instead of flying into a rage, as many expected, he merely said:

"This is no time to have trouble, but in case I meet you again, I'd like to know what to call you."

"My name is Kansas Keen."

"And mine is Charlie," said the youth, quietly.

"Hain't you got a handle to it?"

"My name is Charlie Meadows, and I ain't ashamed of it, as you doubtless are of yours." It was evident that Charlie was getting nettled by the persistent and insulting manner of the man.

"Charlie Greenfield! What a name!"

"There's one thing about it that I like," said Charlie.

"What's that?"

"It's my own, and I'm not dodging the law under the name of my State, as you are."

The words came hot, and were meant, all could see; but still the huge bully only said:

"What State might you hail from?"

"I might hail from Kansas, but I don't."

"I guess you are a Greaser."

"You are a liar!"

"Say, boy, I'll have to clip your claws, I reckon; but as I want to know all about your obituary and tombstone, I again ask you from what State do you hail?"

"Arizona."

"Ah! I has not got a word to say agin that State, and as you comes from there, I'll christen you Arizona Charlie!"

As the bully spoke he suddenly raised an uncorked bottle of wine he held in his hand, and brought it down on his head, breaking the glass and deluging him with wine.

Down in his tracks went the youth, under the sudden and unexpected blow, and when he recovered he found himself in his own room in the hotel, a Mexican nurse seated by his bed and his head bound up.

He asked the nurse several questions, and discovered that the señorita he had first danced with had brought him there and a doctor sent for, who had dressed his wounded head him self.

Congratulating himself upon the hardness of his head, for a slight headache was the only inconvenience he felt from the blow, he dropped off to sleep, and when he awoke found that it was nearly noon on the following day.



His head felt dull, but when the doctor arrived and dressed the cut in his scalp, he expressed himself as well, and sauntered out for a walk and to purchase a new jacket and sombrero, both of which articles he had on being badly stained with blood and wine.

Having suited his somewhat fastidious taste, he took dinner and then went to look after his horse Comanche, intending to take a ride to limber himself up.

To his surprise and indignation, he found his saddle and bridle and horse gone, and was very coolly told by the stableman that Kansas Keen had come there and taken them, and left word if he wanted them he could be found at the Monte Hall.

Charlie at once felt, from all he had heard of the wild and reckless freaks of Kansas Keen, that the man was seeking trouble with him.

To avoid it he knew that he would have to leave town, and men would call him a coward.

He had already been injured by the desperado, whom all seemed to fear, and who had now stolen his horse, and he was not the youth to submit tamely to a wrong done him.

Going to his room in the hotel he looked carefully over his arms, and then started for the Monte Hall.

Upon arriving at the Monte Hall, Charlie found that the man styling himself Kansas Keen had not arrived, but would certainly be there that evening.

Then he returned to the hotel for supper, and was entertained by several with stories of Kansas Keen's bravery, his deviltry, the many men he had killed, and how everybody in Santa Fe feared him.

This certainly was not cheerful news, but it did not deter him from his intention to demand his horse from the desperado, and shortly after dark he again went to the Monte Hall.

The doorman told him that Kansas Keen had gone in an hour before, and paying his fee, he also entered the large saloon.

It was a gambling and drinking saloon combined, with games of faro, monte and dice being played on all sides, and there were in the large room fully a hundred men made up of all classes in Santa Fe.

Charlie glanced carelessly about him, though his eyes were searching for one person, and as he moved through the room he was recognized by some who had been to the fandango the night before, and a voice cried:

"Hullo! there's the young fellow as Kansas Keen baptized Arizona Charlie last night, with a bottle of wine."

"Where is he?" called out a loud voice, and the man who had overheard the remark rose to his feet.

It was Kansas Keen, the very man that the youth was in search of, and having been imbibing freely, he seemed ready for trouble.

"I hain't nothin' agin the boy, only I borrowed his horse, and left word where he'd find me if he wanted him," said the bully.

"And I have found you, and now ask you by what right you dared take my horse?"

"'Cause I wanted to, and by the same right I baptized you Arizona Charlie last night. Have you got anything to say agin my actions?"

All in the room were now attracted by the loud voice of Kansas Keen, and like men accustomed to such scenes, the crowd fell back on either side, leaving the two standing in a human lane.

"Yes; I have a right to say that in striking me as you did last night you were a coward, and in stealing my horse, you are a thief!"

There was no mistaking this language, and a hum of applause at Charlie's pluck in hurling it in the teeth of the desperado went round the room.

It was evident that Kansas Keen was matched for once in his life, and not expecting the war to be carried into his own camp, he had been taken unawares, for the youth had covered him with his revolvers at the first word.

Kansas Keen was no fool, and thus caught he answered:

"You has a glib tongue, youngster, when you holds all the trumps."

"Yes, and if you don't give up my horse I'll make you."

"The horse is in my stable, and I'll keep him there until you come for him."

"I'll have him now."

"Well, you can't get him."

"Then I'll have your life."

There was not a doubt in the mind of any who gazed upon the plucky boy that he meant what he said, and one of Kansas Keen's pards, wishing to rescue his friend, called out:

"I guesses this affair might be settled by a duel."

"I'm willing," cried Kansas Keen.

"I didn't want to kill you—I only want my horse," said Charlie.

"Is you backing, pard?" asked the desperado.

"From you, no; but I am a stranger here, and you insulted me, and struck me last night; but let that go; now, you have stolen my horse, and I'll have him back or kill you."

"I'll play you for him."

"I don't play cards."

"Then you has to fight for him."

"All right if I must; but it must be to-night."

"Now, if you wish it."

"Well, we'll settle it here."

"Who's yer friend?" rudely cried the desperado.

"I have no friends here," said Charlie, casting a glance around the room, and his eyes falling only upon strange faces.

But he did have friends there, for a number of those present admired his pluck, and, hating the desperado, had determined to stand by the youth, and now, as he spoke, an officer of the army stepped forward and said:

"I am Captain Kenton of the army, and will see that the bully takes no unfair advantage of you."

"Thank you, sir," and Charlie at once lowered the weapon which he had all the time kept covering the heart of the bully.

"I guess I'll settle with you, sir, after I've cut that youngster's claws," growled the desperado, offended at the officer calling him a bully.

"All right, if Arizona Charlie, as you call him, don't kill you, I have no objection to saving the hangman trouble," was the cool reply of Captain Kenton, who then led Charlie across the room and stood him against the wall, while Kansas Keen's second did the same for him, for all present seemed to know how the affair was to be arranged.

"You are a good shot?" asked the captain of Charlie.

"A dead shot, sir," and there was no boasting in the tones.

"You can depend upon your pistol?"

"Yes, sir."

"That fellow is as quick as a flash."

"So am I."

"You will both advance at the word, when I give it, and at the third step commence firing on each other as you walk, and empty your pistols if one or the other does not fall," explained the captain.

"I only want one shot," modestly said the youth, and Captain Fenton was evidently pleased with the boy whose part he had taken.

The two were now in position, each with his back to the wall, and a revolver in his hand.

They were about forty paces apart, and a lane of humanity, fifteen feet wide, extended across the room.

All present knew Kansas Keen's deadly aim, having seen him in many a fierce fray; but they did not know what Charlie could do, and trembled for the life of the daring youth, who was almost indifferent.

"Are you ready?"

The question came from Captain Kenton.

"I am allus ready," was Kansas Keen's gruff reply.

"I am ready, sir," said Charlie, in distinct tones.

"March! One! two! three!"

Both had stepped forward at the word march, and as three left the captain's lips, two weapons flashed almost together.

But the one which had flashed a second the quickest did the deadliest work, while the one who was hit did no harm.

It was Arizona Charlie who fired first, and his bullet penetrated the very center of the desperado's forehead, and laid him his length upon the floor, a dead man.

A perfect yell of delight burst from the crowd, for at last a man had fallen whom no marshal in town dared attempt to arrest.

An admiring crowd at once pressed around the youth, while cheers went up from all sides for "Arizona Charlie" until he was glad to seek refuge in departure, accompanied by his friend, the captain.



"Now, my boy, I advise you to leave town, for that fellow's friends will try to assassinate you, and I can offer you pot luck with me, for I start to the fort as soon as I can get a guide."

"I will be glad to take you there," said Charlie.

"By the gods of war, but I am in luck, for we'll start at day-break."

"But I must answer for my killing of that man before a coroner," remarked the youth.

"Nonsense, the town will consider that you have done it a favor, and the alcalde will doubtless look you up to give you a vote of thanks for ridding the community of a terror.

"Come, get your horse, and we'll go to camp."

Charlie did get his horse, and before midnight was asleep in the Government camp over which Captain Kenton had command.

The start was made, and Arizona Charlie having just come from the trail, served as guide for the captain and his escort.

On their way they ran upon a band of Indians double their force, but Charlie shot the chief at long range, and proved that he knew what it was to fight redskins.

Further on the trail they met a man who reported a party of white outlaws upon a raid, and as they were but a short distance off, Charlie proposed that they catch them.

This they did, surprising the outlaws, dashing upon them, and to the joy of Captain Kenton, rescuing the general whom they had captured, and also the army paymaster at Fort Wingate, who had a large sum of Government money.

Upon the head of the outlaw chief there was a large reward, which, by killing the man at close range, Charlie earned.

By such acts of heroism the youth soon made his way, and became an army scout, a position he held until he was twenty-one.

By that time Charlie had reached his growth, and stood six feet four in his socks, while he had great broad shoulders. His strength, quickness and power of endurance were almost superhuman.

He had become a wonder in marksmanship, and all other sports, and could mount his horse, chase a huge wild steer, seize the tail, pass it between the hind legs, throw him without seeming effort, and dismounting, lariat in hand, bind the beast within a minute and a half.

No one dared contest against him, and the fame of Arizona Charlie spread far and wide.

When of age he left the fort and returned to California to reclaim his property.

He had hoped to have no more of the feud of his boyhood.

But the fire still burned, and he was sought by some of the old foes of his name.

A desperate fight followed, but Charlie was the victor, for, though badly wounded, he killed two of his foes and the other two never recovered from the wounds he gave them, though living over a year.

Getting his property, Charlie determined to travel, and selecting two Ute Indians as large as himself, he sailed from San Francisco, taking with him his horses and all things needed for athletic exhibition.

In Honolulu, Japan, China, Australia, New Zealand he traveled, known as "Arizona Charlie, the American Scout, and his Ute Indian Pardos," and he gave entertainments of lasso throwing, shooting with rifle and revolver, knife throwing, high leaping, riding, and the throwing down and tying of wild cattle.

These roving entertainments he kept up for years, and made a great deal of money, after which he sent his Indians home, and continued his travels alone over the world for several years more.

Having seen the Old World to his satisfaction, he returned via South America, Mexico and New York, taking his time in reaching his old home in Arizona, where are the graves of his mother and father, and there, in a fine ranch, he lives and thinks over the past—a past most eventful, and a strange one, indeed.

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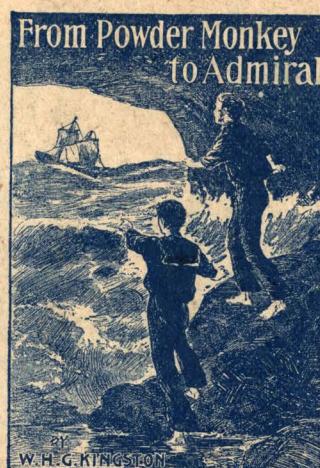
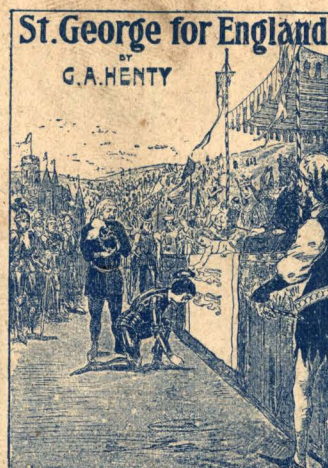
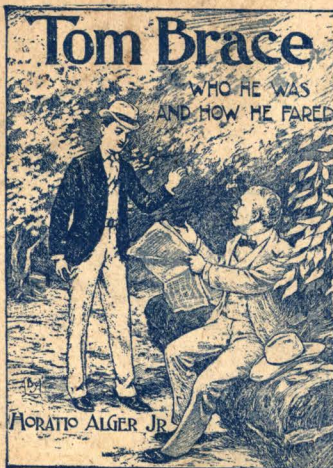
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